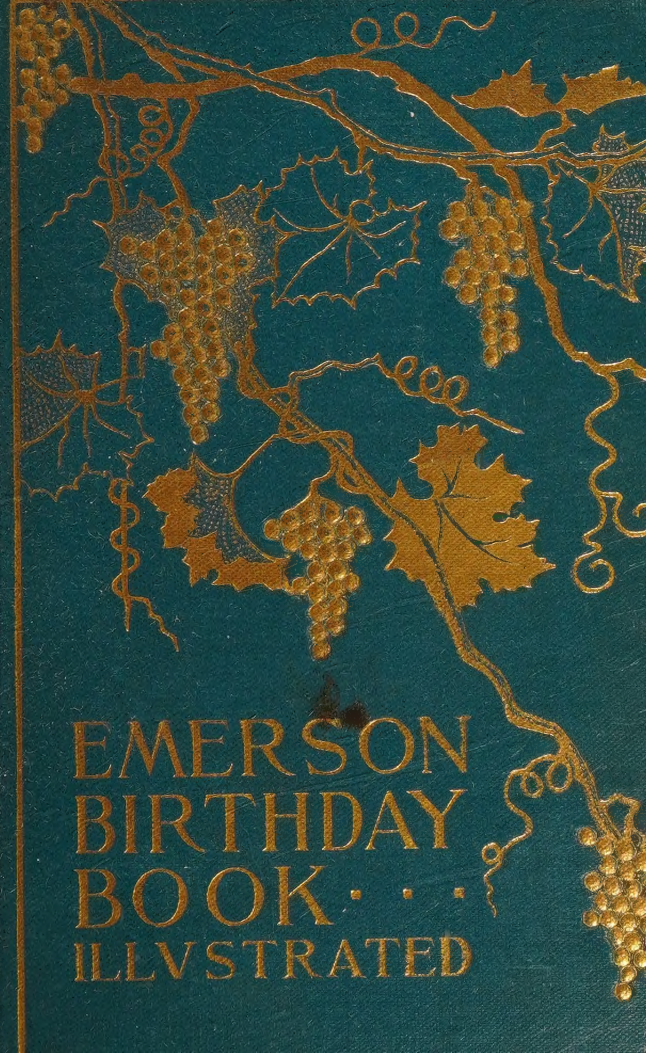
EMERSON
BIRTHDAY
BOOK
ILLVSTRATED

The Old Corner Book
Store, Inc.
Boston, - Mass.

Grace Nichols
1914

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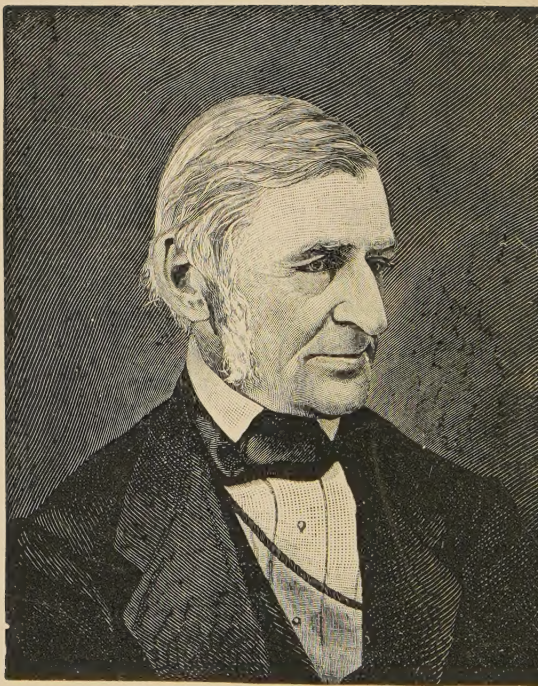

R. Waldo Emerson

THE

Emerson Birthday-Book

He, taking no counsel of past things, but only of the inspiration of his to-day's feeling, surprises them with his tidings, with his better knowledge, his larger view, his steady gaze at the new and future event, whereof they had not thought. *Essay on Eloquence.*

BOSTON
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
New York: 85 Fifth Avenue
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NOTE.

THOUGH great care has been taken in the preparation of this Birthday Book to make judicious selections, so that the passages chosen should not be more disjointed and fragmentary than the nature of such a book renders inevitable, the Editor is conscious of its imperfections, and fears that many admirers of Mr. Emerson will miss sentences which they would have included. But even these omissions will prove how rich and varied are the treasures from which the lover of Emerson can choose. It should be added that Mr. Emerson is in no way responsible for this selection.

January.

DAUGHTERS of Time, the hypocritic Days,
Muffled and dumb like barefoot dervishes,
And marching single in an endless file,
Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.
To each they offer gifts after his will,
Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.

DAYS.

The specious panorama of a year
But multiplies the image of a day, —
A belt of mirrors round a taper's flame ;
And universal Nature, through her vast
And crowded whole, an infinite paroquet,
Repeats one note.

XENOPHANES.

January 1.

The days are made on a loom whereof the warp and woof are past and future time. They are majestically dressed, as if every god brought a thread to the skyey web. . . . . This miracle is hurled into every beggar's hands. The blue sky is a covering for a market, and for the cherubim and seraphim.

There are days when the great are near us, when there is no frown on their brow, no condescension even; when they take us by the hand, and we share their thought. These are days which are the carnival of the year. The angels assume flesh, and repeatedly become visible. The imagination of the gods is excited, and rushes on every side into forms.

Works and Days.

January 2.

We do not believe there is any force in to-day to rival or recreate that beautiful yesterday. We linger in the ruins of the old tent, where once we had bread and shelter and organs, nor believe that the spirit can feed, cover, and nerve us again. We cannot again find aught so dear, so sweet, so graceful. But we sit and weep in vain. The voice of the Almighty saith, "Up and onward for evermore!" We cannot stay amid the ruins.

Compensation.

January 1.

January 2.

January 3.

Illusion lends all its force to hide the values of present time. Who is he who does not always find himself doing something less than his best task? Ah! poor dupe, will you never slip out of the web of the master juggler, — never learn that, as soon as the irrecoverable years have woven their blue glory between to-day and us, these passing hours shall glitter and draw us, as the wildest romance and the homes of beauty and poetry? How difficult to deal erect with them! Works and Days.

January 4.

The Gothic church plainly originated in a rude adaptation of the forest trees with all their boughs to a festal or solemn arcade, as the bands about the cleft pillars still indicate the green withes that tied them. No one can walk in a road cut through pine woods, without being struck with the architectural appearance of the grove, especially in winter, when the barrenness of all other trees shows the low arch of the Saxons. In the woods in a winter afternoon one will see as readily the origin of the stained glass window, with which the Gothic cathedrals are adorned, in the colors of the western sky seen through the bare and crossing branches of the forest. History.

January 3.

January 4.

January 5.

It seems as if the day was not wholly profane in which we have given heed to some natural object. The fall of snowflakes in a still air, preserving to each crystal its perfect form; the blowing of sleet over a wide sheet of water, and over plains; — the reflections of trees and flowers in glassy lakes; the musical steaming odorous south wind, which converts all trees to wind-harps. NATURE.

I do not count the hours I spend
In wandering by the sea;
The forest is my loyal friend,
A Delphic shrine to me.

WALDEINSAMKEIT.

January 6.

It only needs, that a just man should walk in our streets, to make it appear how pitiful and inartificial a contrivance is our legislation. The man whose part is taken, and who does not wait for society in anything, has a power which society cannot choose but feel. NEW ENGLAND REFORMERS.

And ye shall succor men;
'T is nobleness to serve;
Help them who cannot help again:
Beware from right to swerve.

BOSTON HYMN.

January 5.

January 6.

Charles Sumner, 1811.

January 7.

We want a ship in these billows we inhabit. An angular, dogmatic house would be rent to chips and splinters, in this storm of many elements. No, it must be tight, and fit to the form of man, to live at all; as a shell must dictate the architecture of a house founded on the sea. The soul of man must be the type of our scheme, just as the body of man is the type after which a dwelling-house is built. Adaptiveness is the peculiarity of human nature. REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

January 8.

The laws of each art are convertible into every other. Raphael paints wisdom; Handel sings it, Phidias carves it, Shakespeare writes it, Wren builds it, Columbus sails it, Luther preaches it, Washington arms it, Watt mechanizes it. ART.

For the world was built in order,
And the atoms march in tune;
Rhyme the pipe, and Time the warder,
The sun obeys them, and the moon.
Orb and atom forth they prance,
When they hear from far the rune.

MONADNOCK.

JANUARY 7.

Frederick Carleton Gulick
1876–1901

JANUARY 8.

January 9.

Life brings to each his task, and whatever art you select, algebra, planting, architecture, poems, commerce, politics, — all are attainable, even to the miraculous triumphs, on the same terms, of selecting that for which you are apt; — begin at the beginning, proceed in order, step by step. 'T is as easy to twist iron anchors and braid cannons as to braid straw, to boil granite as to boil water, if you take all the steps in order. Wherever there is failure there is some giddiness, some superstition about luck, some step omitted, which nature never pardons.

Considerations by the Way.

January 10.

Next to the originator of a good sentence is the first quoter of it. Many will read the book before one thinks of quoting a passage. As soon as he has done this, that line will be quoted east and west. Then there are great ways of borrowing. Genius borrows nobly. When Shakespeare is charged with debts to his authors, Landor replies: "Yet he was more original than his originals. He breathed upon dead bodies and brought them into life."

Quotation and Originality.

January 9.

January 10.

January 11.

It never was in the power of any man, or any community, to call the arts into being. They come to serve his actual wants, never to please his fancy. These arts have their origin always in some enthusiasm, as love, patriotism, or religion. Art.

> Not from a vain or shallow thought
> His awful Jove young Phidias brought,
> Never from lips of cunning fell
> The thrilling Delphic oracle;
> Out from the heart of nature rolled
> The burdens of the Bible old;
> The litanies of nations came,
> Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
> Up from the burning core below, —
> The canticles of love and woe.
>
> The Problem.

January 12.

Our nineteenth century is the age of tools. They grow out of our structure. "Man is the metre of all things," said Aristotle; "the hand is the instrument of instruments, and the mind is the form of forms." The human body is the magazine of inventions, the patent-office, where are the models from which every hint was taken. All the tools and engines on earth are only extensions of its limbs and senses. Works and Days.

January 11.

January 12.

January 13.

Bad times have a scientific value. These are occasions a good learner would not miss. As we go gladly to Faneuil Hall, to be played upon by the stormy winds and strong fingers of enraged patriotism, so is a fanatical persecution, civil war, national bankruptcy, or revolution, more rich in the central tones than languid years of prosperity. . . . .

In front of these sinister facts, the first lesson of history is the good of evil. Good is a good doctor, but Bad is sometimes a better.

Considerations by the Way.

January 14.

Great men are they who see that spiritual is stronger than any material force; that thoughts rule the world.

Men say, Ah! if a man could impart his talent, instead of his performance, what mountains of guineas would be paid! Yes, but in the measure of his absolute veracity he does impart it.

The Progress of Culture.

Nor knowest thou what argument
Thy life to thy neighbor's creed has lent.
All are needed by each one;
Nothing is fair or good alone.

Each and All

January 13.

January 14.

January 15.

Stamens and spores, on which we lavish so many years, are not finalities, and man, when his powers unfold in order, will take Nature along with him, and emit light into all her recesses. Beauty.

And what if Trade sow cities
Like shells along the shore,
And thatch with towns the prairie broad
With railings ironed o'er? —
They are but sailing foam-bells
Along Thought's causing stream,
And take their shape and sun-color
From him that sends the dream.
The World-Soul.

January 16.

St. Augustine described the nature of God as a circle whose centre was everywhere, and its circumference nowhere.

Our life is an apprenticeship to the truth that around every circle another can be drawn; that there is no end in nature, but every end is a beginning; that there is always another dawn risen on mid-noon, and under every deep a lower deep opens. Circles.

January 15.

January 16.

January 17.

The restraining grace of common-sense is the mark of all the valid minds, — of Æsop, Aristotle, Alfred, Luther, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Franklin. . . . . The common-sense which does not meddle with the absolute, but takes things at their word, — things as they appear. Poetry and Imagination.

The true test of civilization is, not the census, nor the size of cities, nor the crops — no, but the kind of man the country turns out. Civilization.

January 18.

The artist who is to produce a work which is to be admired by all men, and which is to be more beautiful to the eye in proportion to its culture, must disindividualize himself, and be a man of no party, and no manner, and no age, but one through whom the soul of all men circulates, as the common air through his lungs. Art.

He is the essence that inquires,
He is the axis of the star,
He is the sparkle of the spar,
He is the heart of every creature,
He is the meaning of each feature ;
And his mind is the sky,
Than all it holds more deep, more high.
Woodnotes.

January 17.

Benjamin Franklin, 1706.

January 18.

January 19.

Steam was, till the other day, the devil which we dreaded. . . . . But the Marquis of Worcester, Watt, and Fulton, bethought themselves, that, where was power, was not devil, but was God ; that it must be availed of, and not by any means let off and wasted.

Could he lift pots and roofs and houses so handily ? he was the workman they were in search of. He could be used to lift away, chain, and compel other devils, far more reluctant and dangerous, namely, cubic miles of earth, mountains, weight or resistance of water, machinery, and the labors of all men in the world ; and time he shall lengthen, and shorten space.

Fate.

January 20.

The less government we have, the better — the fewer laws, and the less confided power. The antidote to this abuse of formal government is, the influence of private character, the growth of the Individual.

Politics.

Can thy style-discerning eye
The hidden-working Builder spy,
Who builds, yet makes no chips, no din,
With hammer soft as snowflake's flight.

Monadnock.

January 19.

James Watt, 1736.

January 20.

Blameless master of the games,
King of sport that never shames,
He shall daily joy dispense
Hid in song's sweet influence.
Things more cheerly live and go,
What time the subtle mind
Sings aloud the tune whereto
Their pulses beat,
And march their feet,
And their members are combined.

MERLIN.

JANUARY 22.

Lord Bacon has the English duality. His centuries of observations on useful science, and his experiments, I suppose, were worth nothing. . . . . But he drinks of a diviner stream, and marks the influx of idealism into England. Where that goes is poetry, health, and progress. ENGLISH TRAITS.

Byron's rare talent is conspicuously partial. He has not sweetness, nor solid knowledge, nor lofty aim. He had a rare skill for rhythm, unmatched facility of expression, a firm, ductile thread of gold. His rhythms do not suggest any restraint, but the utmost freedom, as the rules of the dance do not fetter the good dancer, but exhibit his grace.

PARNASSUS.

January 21.

January 22.

Bacon, 1561; Byron, 1788.

January 23.

I think Hans Andersen's story of the cobweb cloth woven so fine that it was invisible, — woven for the king's garment, — must mean manners, which do really clothe a princely nature. Such a one can well go in a blanket, if he would. In the gymnasium or on the sea-beach his superiority does not leave him. But he who has not this fine garment of behavior is studious of dress, and then not less of house and furniture and pictures and gardens, in all which he hopes to lies *perdu*, and not be exposed.

Social Aims.

January 24.

Fashion is not good sense absolute, but relative; not good sense private, but good sense entertaining company. It hates corners and sharp points of character, hates quarrelsome, egotistical, solitary, and gloomy people; hates whatever can interfere with total blending of parties; whilst it values all peculiarities as in the highest degree refreshing, which can consist with good fellowship. And besides the general infusion of wit to heighten civility, the direct splendor of intellectual power is ever welcome in fine society as the costliest addition to its rule and its credit.

Manners.

JANUARY 24.

My dear Grandmother
Charlotte Chandler Kimball
1815 – 1907

January 25.

A good poem goes about the world offering itself to reasonable men, who read it with joy and carry it to their reasonable neighbors. Thus it draws to it the wise and generous souls, confirming their secret thoughts, and, through their sympathy, really publishing itself. It affects the character of its readers by formulating their opinions and feelings, and inevitably prompting their daily action. . . . . Do you think that Burns has had no influence on the life of men and women in Scotland, — has opened no eyes and ears to the face of nature, and the dignity of man, and the charm and excellence of woman?

MORALS.

January 26.

Life is a succession of lessons which must be lived to be understood. All is riddle, and the key to a riddle is another riddle. There are as many pillows of illusion as flakes in a snow-storm. We wake from one dream into another dream. The toys, to be sure, are various, and are graduated in refinement to the quality of the dupe. The intellectual man requires a fine bait; the sots are easily amused. But everybody is drugged with his own frenzy, and the pageant marches at all hours, with music and banner and badge.

ILLUSIONS.

January 25

January 26

January 27.

Everything yields. The very glaciers are viscous or regelate into conformity, and the stiffest patriots falter and compromise; so that *will* cannot be depended on to save us.

How rare are acts of will! We are all living according to custom; we do as other people do, and shrink from an act of our own. . . . . The tailor makes your dress; the baker your bread; the upholsterer, from an imported book of patterns, your furniture; the Bishop of London your faith.

THE FORTUNE OF THE REPUBLIC.

January 28.

There is always a best way of doing everything, if it be to boil an egg. Manners are the happy ways of doing things: each once a stroke of genius or of love, — now repeated and hardened into usage. They form at last a rich varnish, with which the routine of life is washed, and its details adorned. If they are superficial, so are the dewdrops which give such a depth to the morning meadows. BEHAVIOR.

Grace, Beauty, and Caprice
Build this golden portal;
Graceful women, chosen men,
Dazzle every mortal. MANNERS.

January 27.

January 28.

January 29.

A colossal soul, he lies vast abroad on his times, uncomprehended by them, and requires a long focal distance to be seen; suggests, as Aristotle, Bacon, Selden, Humboldt, that a certain vastness of learning, or *quasi* omnipresence of the human soul in nature, is possible.

Representative Men.

In spirit-worlds he trod alone,
But walked the earth unmarked, unknown.
The near by-stander caught no sound, —
Yet they who listened far aloof
Heard rendings of the skyey roof,
And felt, beneath, the quaking ground;
And his air-sown, unheeded words,
In the next age, are flaming swords.

Solution.

January 30.

Landor carries to its height the love of freak which the English delight to indulge, as if to signalize their commanding freedom. He has a wonderful brain, despotic, violent, and inexhaustible, meant for a soldier, by what chance converted to letters, in which there is not a style nor a tint not known to him, yet with an English appetite for action and heroes. . . . . Year after year the scholar must still go back to Landor for a multitude of elegant sentences, — for wisdom, wit, and indignation that are unforgetable.

English Traits.

JANUARY 29.

Emanuel Swedenborg, 1688.

JANUARY 30.

Walter Savage Landor, 1775.

Freedom all winged expands,
Nor perches in a narrow place ;
Her broad van seeks unplanted lands ;
She loves a poor and virtuous race.
Clinging to a colder zone
Whose dark sky sheds the snow-flake down,
The snow-flake is her banner's star,
Her stripes the boreal streamers are.
Long she loved the Northman well ;
Now the iron age is done,
She will not refuse to dwell
With the offspring of the Sun. VOLUNTARIES

Firm-braced I sought my ancient woods,
Struggling through the drifted roads ;
The whited desert knew me not,
Snow-ridges masked each darling spot ;
The summer dells, by genius haunted,
One arctic moon had disenchanted.
All the sweet secrets therein hid
By Fancy, ghastly spells undid.
Eldest mason, Frost, had piled
Swift cathedrals in the wild ;
The piny hosts were sheeted ghosts
In the star-lit minster aisled.
I found no joy ; the icy wind
Might rule the forest to his mind.
Who would freeze on frozen lakes ?
Back to books and sheltered home,
And wood-fire flickering on the walls,
To hear, when, mid our talk and games,
Without the baffled north wind calls.

MAY-DAY.

February.

COME see the north-wind's masonry.
Out of an unseen quarry evermore
Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer
Curves his white bastions with projected roof
Round every windward stake, or tree, or door.
Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work
So fanciful, so savage, naught cares he
For number or proportion. Mockingly,
On coop or kennel he hangs Parian wreaths ;
A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn ;
Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall,
Maugre the farmer's sighs ; and, at the gate,
A tapering turret overtops the work :
And when his hours are numbered, and the world
Is all his own, retiring, as he were not,
Leaves, when the sun appears, astonished Art
To mimic in slow structures, stone by stone,
Built in an age, the mad wind's night-work,
The frolic architecture of the snow.

THE SNOW-STORM.

February 1.

I honor that man whose ambition it is, not to win laurels in the state or the army, not to be a jurist or a naturalist, not to be a poet or commander, but to be a master of living well, and to administer the offices of master or servant, of husband, father, and friend. Domestic Life.

The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm. Snow-Storm.

February 2.

"O Iole, how did you know that Hercules was a god?" "Because," answered Iole, "I was content the moment my eyes fell on him. When I beheld Theseus, I desired that I might see him offer battle, or at least guide his horses in the chariot-race; but Hercules did not wait for a contest; he conquered whether he stood, or walked, or sat, or whatever thing he did." Man, ordinarily a pendant to events, only half attached, and that awkwardly, to the world he lives in, in these examples appears to share the life of things, and to be an expression of the same laws which control the tides and the sun, numbers and quantities.
Character.

February 1.

February 2.

February 3.

Every master has found his materials collected, and his power lay in his sympathy with his people, and in his love of the materials he wrought in. What an economy of power! and what a compensation for the shortness of life! All is done to his hand. The world has brought him thus far on his way. The human race has gone out before him, sunk the hills, filled the hollows, and bridged the rivers. . . . . Men, nations, poets, artisans, women, all have worked for him, and he enters into their labors.

Representative Men.

February 4.

Kings are said to have long arms, but every man should have long arms, and should pluck his living, his instruments, his power, and his knowing, from the sun, moon, and stars. Is not then the demand to be rich legitimate? Yet, I have never seen a rich man. I have never seen a man as rich as all men ought to be, or with an adequate command of nature.

Wealth.

When the pine tosses its cones
To the song of its waterfall tones,
Who speeds to the woodland walks?
To birds and trees who talks?

Woodnotes

February 4.

Charlotte Nichols Green

February 5.

Most men and most women are merely one couple more. Now and then, one has a new cell or camarilla opened in his brain — an architectural, a musical, or a philological knack, some stray taste or talent for flowers, or chemistry, or pigments, or story-telling, a good hand for drawing, a good foot for dancing, an athletic frame for wide journeying, etc. FATE.

The fountains of invention and beauty in modern society are all but dried up. A popular novel, a theatre, or a ball-room makes us feel that we are all paupers in the almshouse of this world, without dignity, without skill, or industry. ART.

February 6.

The first and last lesson of the useful arts is, that Nature tyrannizes over our works. They must be conformed to her law, or they will be ground to powder by her omnipresent activity. Nothing droll, nothing whimsical will endure. Nature is ever interfering with Art. You cannot build your house or pagoda as you will, but as you must. There is a quick bound set to your caprice. The leaning tower can only lean so far. The veranda or pagoda roof can curve upward only to a certain point. ART.

February 5.

February 6.

February 7.

Shall we then judge a country by the majority, or by the minority? By the minority, surely. 'T is pedantry to estimate nations by the census, or by square miles of land, or other than by their importance to the mind of the time. Masses! the calamity is the masses. I do not wish any mass at all, but honest men only, lovely, sweet, accomplished women only, and no shovel-handed, narrow-brained, gin-drinking million stockingers or lazaroni at all. All the feats which make our civility were the thoughts of a few good heads.

Considerations by the Way.

February 8.

What signifies a pedigree of a hundred links, against a cotton-spinner with steam in his mill; or, against a company of broad-shouldered Liverpool merchants, for whom Stephenson and Brunel are contriving locomotives and a tubular bridge?

These Saxons are the hands of mankind. They have the taste for toil, a distaste for pleasure or repose, and the telescopic appreciation of distant gain. They are the wealth-makers. English Traits.

February 7.

February 8.

February 9.

There are objections to every course of life and action, and the practical wisdom infers an indifferency, from the omnipresence of objection. The whole frame of things preaches indifferency. Do not craze yourself with thinking, but go about your business anywhere. Life is not intellectual or critical, but sturdy. Its chief good is for well-mixed people who can enjoy what they find, without question. Nature hates peeping, and our mothers speak her very sense when they say, "Children, eat your victuals, and say no more of it." Experience.

February 10.

And yet we do not provide for the greatest good of life. We take care of our health; we lay up money; we make our roof tight, and our clothing sufficient; but who provides wisely that he shall not be wanting in the best property of all, — friends?

Considerations by the Way.

And not to-day and not to-morrow
Can drain its wealth of hope and sorrow;
But day by day, to loving ear
Unlocks new sense and loftier cheer.

Maiden Speech of the Æolian Harp

FEBRUARY 9.

Edwin Farnham Greene

FEBRUARY 10.

February 11.

Every ship that comes to America got its chart from Columbus. Every novel is a debtor to Homer Every carpenter who shaves with a foreplane borrows the genius of a forgotten inventor. Life is girt all round with a zodiac of sciences, the contributions of men who have perished to add their point of light to our sky. Representative Men.

He doth elect
The beautiful and fortunate,
And the sons of intellect,
And the souls of ample fate,
Who the Future's gates unbar, —
Minions of the Morning Star.

The Dæmonic Love.

February 12.

A great style of hero draws equally all classes, all the extremes of society, till we say the very dogs believe in him. . . . . Abraham Lincoln is perhaps the most remarkable example of this class that we have seen, — a man who was at home and welcome with the humblest, and with a spirit and a practical vein in the times of terror that commanded the admiration of the wisest. His heart was as great as the world, but there was no room in it to hold the memory of a wrong. Greatness.

FEBRUARY 12.

Abraham Lincoln, 1809.

Grandma died 1907

February 13.

Every man is not so much a workman in the world, as he is a suggestion of that he should be. Men walk as prophecies of the next age.

Circles.

Therein I hear the Parcæ reel
The threads of man at their humming-wheel,
The threads of life, and power, and pain,
So sweet and mournful falls the strain.
And best can teach its Delphian chord
How Nature to the soul is moored,
If once again that silent string,
As erst it wont, would thrill and ring.

The Harp.

February 14.

Nature will be reported. All things are engaged in writing their history. The planet, the pebble, goes attended by its shadow. The rolling rock leaves its scratches on the mountain; the river, its channel in the soil; the animal, its bones in the stratum; the fern and leaf, their modest epitaph in the coal. The falling drop makes its sculpture in the sand or the stone. Not a foot steps into the snow, or along the ground, but prints, in characters, more or less lasting, a map of its march.

Representative Men.

February 13.

February 14.

February 15.

The red men told Columbus, "they had an herb which took away fatigue;" but he found the illusion of "arriving from the east at the Indies" more composing to his lofty spirit than any tobacco. Is not our faith in the impenetrability of matter more sedative than narcotics! You play with jackstraws, balls, bowls, horse and gun, estates and politics; but there are finer games before you. . . . . Life will show you masks that are worth all your carnivals.

Illusions.

February 16.

We prize books, and they prize them most who are themselves wise.

Quotation and Originality.

Whoever looks at the insect world, at flies, aphides, gnats, and innumerable parasites, and even at the infant mammals, must have remarked the extreme content they take in suction, which constitutes the main business of their life. If we go into a library or news-room, we see the same function on a higher plan, performed with like ardor, with equal impatience of interruption, indicating the sweetness of the act. In the highest civilization the book is still the highest delight.

Quotation and Originality.

February 15.

February 16.

February 17.

What have these arts done for the character, for the worth of mankind? Are men better? 'T is sometimes questioned whether morals have not declined as the arts have ascended. Here are great arts and little men. . . . . Look up the inventors. Each has his own knack; his genius is in veins and spots. But the great, equal, symmetrical brain, fed from a great heart, you shall not find. Every one has more to hide than he has to show, or is lamed by his excellence. Works and Days.

February 18.

The chapter of fascinations is very long. Great is paint; nay, God is the painter; and we rightly accuse the critic who destroys too many illusions. Society does not love its unmaskers. Illusions.

We buy ashes for bread;
We buy diluted wine;
Give me of the true, —
Whose ample leaves and tendrils curled
Among the silver hills of heaven,
Draw everlasting dew. Bacchus.

February 17.

February 18.

February 19.

The ornament of a house is the friends who frequent it. There is no event greater in life than the appearance of new persons about our hearth, except it be the progress of the character which draws them. It has been finely added by Landor to his definition of the *great man*, "It is he who can call together the most select company when it pleases him." . . . . In the progress of each man's character, he will have learned the lesson of life who is skilful in the ethics of friendship.

Domestic Life.

February 20.

A man must be clothed with society, or we shall feel a certain bareness and poverty, as of a displaced and unfurnished member.

Society and Solitude.

I have thought it thoroughly over, —
State of hermit, state of lover;
We must have society,
We cannot spare variety.
Hear you, then, celestial fellows!
Fits not to be overzealous;
Steads not to work on the clean jump,
Nor wine nor brains perpetual pump.

Alphonso of Castile.

February 19.

February 20.

February 21.

The great make us feel, first of all, the indifference of circumstances. They call into activity the higher perceptions, and subdue the low habits of comfort and luxury; but the higher perceptions find their objects everywhere; only the low habits need palaces and banquets.

Let a man, then, say my house is here in the county for the culture of the county; — an eating-house and sleeping-house for travellers it shall be, but it shall be much more. Domestic Life.

February 22.

Nature seems to exist for the excellent. The world is upheld by the veracity of good men: they make the earth wholesome. They who lived with them found life glad and nutritious. Life is sweet and tolerable only in our belief in such society; and actually or ideally, we manage to live with superiors. We call our children and our lands by their names. Their names are wrought into the verbs of language, their works and effigies are in our houses, and every circumstance of the day recalls an anecdote of them.

Representative Men.

February 21.

February 22.

George Washington, 1732.

February 23.

All poets have signalized their consciousness of rare moments when they were superior to themselves — when a light, a freedom, a power came to them, which lifted them to performances far better than they could reach at other times.

Inspiration.

Many feet in summer seek,
Oft, my far-appearing peak;
In the dreaded winter time,
None save dappling shadows climb
Under clouds, my lonely head,
Old as the sun, old almost as the shade.

Monadnock.

February 24.

Men are helpful through the intellect and the affections. Other help I find a false appearance. If you affect to give me bread and fire, I perceive that I pay for it in full price, and at last it leaves me as it found me, neither better nor worse; but all mental and moral force is a positive good.

Representative Men.

To help the young soul, add energy, inspire hope, and blow the coals into a useful flame; to redeem defeat by new thought, by firm action, that is not easy, that is the work of divine men.

Success.

February 23.

February 24.

February 25.

The skill that pervades complex details; the man that maintains himself; the chimney taught to burn its own smoke; the farm made to produce all that is consumed on it; the very prison compelled to maintain itself and yield a revenue, and, better still, made a reform school, and a manufactory of honest men out of rogues, as the steamer made fresh water out of salt, — all these are examples of that tendency to combine antagonisms, and utilize evil, which is the index of high civilization.

Civilization.

February 26.

The eyes of men converse as much as their tongues, with the advantage that the ocular dialect needs no dictionary, but is understood all the world over.

Behavior.

Say, what other metre is it
Than the meeting of the eyes?
Nature poureth into nature
Through the channels of that feature
Riding on the ray of sight,
Fleeter far than whirlwinds go,
Or for service, or delight,
Hearts to hearts their meaning show.

The Visit.

February 25.

February 26.

February 27.

Poetry is the consolation of mortal men. They live cabined, cribbed, confined, in a narrow and trivial lot — in wants, pains, anxieties, and superstitions, in profligate politics, in personal animosities, in mean employments — and victims of these; and the nobler powers untried, unknown. A poet comes who lifts the veil, gives them glimpses of the laws of the universe; shows them the circumstance as illusion; shows that nature is only a language to express the laws, which are grand and beautiful, and lets them, by his songs, into some of the realities.

Poetry and Imagination.

February 28.

There have been men with deeper insight; but, one would say, never a man with such abundance of thoughts. He is never dull, never insincere, and has the genius to make the reader care for all that he cares for.

The sincerity and marrow of the man reaches to his sentences. . . . . He talks with shrewdness, knows the world, and books, and himself, and uses the positive degree; never shrieks, or protests, or prays; no weakness, no convulsion, no superlative. . . . He rarely mounts or sinks; likes to feel solid ground, and the stones underneath. His writing has no enthusiasms, no aspiration; contented, self-respecting, and keeping the middle of the road.

Representative Men.

February 27.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1807.

February 28.

Michel de Montaigne, 1533.

February 29.

Delicate omens traced in air
To the lone bard true witness bare;
Birds with auguries on their wings
Chanted undeceiving things
Him to beckon, him to warn;
Well might then the poet scorn
To learn of scribe or courier
Hints writ in vaster character;
And on his mind at dawn of day,
Soft shadows of the evening lay.
For the prevision is allied
Unto the thing so signified;
Or say, the foresight that awaits
Is the same Genius that creates. Fate.

This poet, though he live apart,
Moved by his hospitable heart,
Sped, when I passed his sylvan fort,
To do the honors of his court,
As fits a feathered lord of land;
Flew near, with soft wing grazed my hand,
Hopped on the bough, then, darting low,
Prints his small impress on the snow,
Shows feats of his gymnastic play,
Head downward, clinging to the spray.

Here was this atom in full breath,
Hurling defiance at vast death;
This scrap of valor just for play
Fronts the north-wind in waistcoat gray,
As if to shame my weak behavior;
I greeted loud my little savior,
"You pet! what dost here? and what for?
In these woods, thy small Labrador,
At this pinch, wee San Salvador!
What fire burns in that little chest
So frolic, stout, and self-possest?
Henceforth I wear no stripe but thine;
Ashes and jet all hues outshine.
Why are not diamonds black and gray,
To ape thy dare-devil array?
And I affirm, the spacious North
Exists to draw thy virtue forth."

March.

SPRING will not her time forerun,
Mix polar night with tropic glow,
Nor cloy us with unshaded sun,
Nor wanton skip with bacchic dance,
But she has the temperance
Of the gods, whereof she is one, —
Masks her treasury of heat
Under east-winds crossed with sleet.
Plants and birds and humble creatures
Well accept her rule austere ;
Titan-born, to hardy natures
Cold is genial and dear. MAY-DAY.

March 1.

Our life is March weather, savage and serene in one hour. We go forth austere, dedicated, believing in the iron links of Destiny, and will not turn on our heel to save our life ; but a book or a bust, or only the sound of a name, shoots a spark through the nerves, and we suddenly believe in will.

Representative Men.

The Titan heeds his sky-affairs,
Rich rents and wide alliance shares ;
Mysteries of color daily laid
By morn and eve in light and shade ;
And sweet varieties of chance,
And the mystic seasons' dance ;
And thief-like step of liberal hours
Thawing snow-drift into flowers.
Oh, wondrous craft of plant and stone
By eldest science wrought and shown !

Monadnock

March 2.

The world rolls round, mistrust it not,
Befalls again what once befell ;
All things return, both sphere and mote,
And I shall hear my bluebird's note
And dream the dream of Auburn-dell.

May-Day.

March 1.

March 2.

March 3.

The man that works at home helps society at large with somewhat more of certainty than he who devotes himself to charities. Farming.

We have no pleasure in thinking of a benevolence that is only measured by its works. Love is inexhaustible, and if its estate is wasted, its granary emptied, still cheers and enriches, and the man, though he sleep, seems to purify the air, and his house to adorn the landscape and strengthen the laws. People always recognize this difference. We know who is benevolent by quite other means than the amount of subscription to soup societies. It is only low merits that can be enumerated.

Character.

March 4.

We have a debt to every great heart, to every fine genius ; to those who have put life and fortune on the cast of an act of justice ; to those who have added new sciences ; to those who have refined life by elegant pursuits. 'T is the fine souls who serve us, and not what is called fine society. Fine society is only a self-protection against the vulgarities of the street and the tavern.

Considerations by the Way.

High thanks I owe you, excellent lovers, who carry out the world for me to new and noble depths, and enlarge the meaning of all my thoughts.

Friendship.

March 3.

March 4.

March 5.

I know not whether there be, as is alleged, in the upper region of our atmosphere, a permanent westerly current, which carries with it all atoms which rise to that height, but I see, that when souls reach a certain clearness of perception, they accept a knowledge and motive above selfishness. A breath of will blows eternally through the universe of souls in the direction of the Right and Necessary. It is the air which all intellects inhale and exhale, and it is the wind which blows the world into order and orbit.

Fate.

March 6.

We cannot look at works of art but they teach us how near man is to creating. Michael Angelo is largely filled with the Creator that made and makes men. How much of the original craft remains in him, and he a mortal man! In him and the like perfecter brains the instinct is resistless, knows the right way, is melodious, and at all points divine.

Poetry and Imagination.

The hand that rounded Peter's dome,
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome,
Wrought in a sad sincerity;
Himself from God he could not free;
He builded better than he knew; —
The conscious stone to beauty grew.

The Problem.

MARCH 5.

E. H. Abbott + Sarah A. Ernst
Married 1914

MARCH 6.

Michelangelo Buonarotti, 1475.

March 7.

There is one topic peremptorily forbidden to all well-bred, to all rational mortals, namely, their distempers. If you have not slept, or if you have slept, or if you have headache, or sciatica, or leprosy, or thunder-stroke, I beseech you, by all angels, to hold your peace, and not pollute the morning, to which all the housemates bring serene and pleasant thoughts, by corruption and groans.

There are people who come in ever, like a child, with a piece of good news. It was said of the late Lord Holland, that he always came down to breakfast with the air of a man who had just met with some signal good fortune. Behavior.

March 8.

Persons approach us famous for their beauty, for their accomplishments, worthy of all wonder for their charms and gifts; they dedicate their own skill to the hour and the company, with very imperfect result. . . . . Then, when all is done, a person of related mind, a brother or sister by nature, comes to us so softly and easily, so nearly and intimately, as if it were the blood in our proper veins, that we feel as if some one was gone, instead of another having come; we are utterly relieved and refreshed; it is a sort of joyful solitude.

Spiritual Laws.

March 7.

March 8.

March 9.

No man has a prosperity so high or firm but two or three words can dishearten it. There is no calamity which right words will not begin to redress.

Eloquence.

Fond children, ye desire
To please each other well;
Another round, a higher,
Ye shall climb on the heavenly stair,
And selfish preference forbear;
And in right deserving,
And without a swerving
Each from your proper state
Weave roses for your mate.

The Celestial Love.

March 10.

The law of the table is Beauty — a respect to the common soul of all the guests. Everything is unseasonable which is private to two or three or any portion of the company. Tact never violates for a moment this law; never intrudes the orders of the house, the vices of the absent, or a tariff of expenses, or professional privacies; as we say, we never "talk shop" before company. Lovers abstain from caresses, and haters from insults, whilst they sit in one parlor with common friends.

Social Aims.

March 9.

March 10.

March 11.

You believe yourselves rooted and grounded on adamant; when really you are spinning like bubbles in a river, you know not whither or whence, and you are bottomed and capped and wrapped in delusions. Representative Men.

A shudder ran around the sky;
The stern old war-gods shook their heads;
The seraphs frowned from myrtle beds;
Seemed to the holy festival
The rash word boded ill to all;
The balance-beam of Fate was bent;
The bounds of good and ill were rent;
Strong Hades could not keep his own,
But all slid to confusion. Uriel.

March 12.

Go into the house. If the proprietor is constrained and deferring, 't is of no importance how large his house, how beautiful his grounds, — you quickly come to the end of all; but if the man is self-possessed, happy, and at home, his house is deep-founded, indefinitely large and interesting, the roof and dome buoyant as the sky. Under the humblest roof, the commonest person in plain clothes sits there massive, cheerful, yet formidable like the Egyptian colossi. Behavior.

We owe to man higher succors than food and fire. We owe to man man. Domestic Life.

March 11.

March 12.

March 13.

And what fastens attention, in the intercourse of life, like any passage betraying affection between two parties? Perhaps we never saw them before, and never shall meet them again. But we see them exchange a glance, or betray a deep emotion, and we are no longer strangers. Love.

'T is a sparkle passing
From each to each, from thee to me. . . . .
Is none so high, so mean is none,
But seals and feels this union.

The Dæmonic and Celestial Love.

March 14.

There are times when the intellect is so active that everything seems to run to meet it. Its supplies are found without much thought as to studies. Knowledge runs to the man, and the man runs to knowledge. In spring, when the snow melts, the maple-trees flow with sugar, and you cannot get tubs fast enough; but it is only for a few days. The hunter on the prairie, at the right season, has no need of choosing his ground; east, west, by the river, by the timber, he is everywhere near his game. But the favorable conditions are rather the exception than the rule.

Quotation and Originality.

March 13.

March 14

March 15.

Nature is full of freaks, and now puts an old head on young shoulders, and then a young heart beating under fourscore winters.

Wherever there is power, there is age. Don't be deceived by dimples and curls. I tell you that babe is a thousand years old.

Time is, indeed, the theatre and seat of illusion: nothing is so ductile and elastic. The mind stretches an hour to a century, and dwarfs an age to an hour. Old Age.

March 16.

Fate is unpenetrated causes. The water drowns ship and sailor like a grain of dust. But learn to swim, trim your bark, and the wave which drowned it will be cloven by it, and carry it, like its own foam, a plume and a power. The cold is inconsiderate of persons, tingles your blood, freezes a man like a dew-drop. But learn to skate, and the ice will give you a graceful, sweet, and poetic motion. The cold will brace your limbs and brain to genius, and make you foremost men of time. Fate.

MARCH 15.

Grandfather's birthday
(Daniel Linsdale)
Mother and Father's Wedding
day - 1870 -

MARCH 16.

March 17.

Nothing can be more excellent in kind than the Corinthian grace of Gertrude's manners, and yet Blanche, who has no manners, has better manners than she; for the movements of Blanche are the sallies of a spirit which is sufficient for the moment, and she can afford to express every thought by instant action. BEAUTY.

That you are fair or wise is vain,
Or strong, or rich, or generous;
You must have also the untaught strain
That sheds beauty on the rose. FATE.

March 18.

The one prudence in life is concentration; the one evil is dissipation; and it makes no difference whether our dissipations are coarse or fine; property and its cares, friends, and a social habit, or politics, or music, or feasting. Everything is good which takes away one plaything and delusion more, and drives us home to add one stroke of faithful work.

Concentration is the secret of strength in politics, in war, in trade, in short, in all management of human affairs. POWER.

March 18.

Richard Pearson Strong
1872

March 19.

What is our life but an endless flight of winged facts or events! In splendid variety these changes come, all putting questions to the human spirit.

History.

Every night alighting down
In new landscapes of romance
Where darkling feed the clamorous clans
By lonely lakes to men unknown. .
Come the tumult whence it will,
It is a sound, it is a token
That the marble sleep is broken,
And the sun shall his orb fulfil. May-Day.

March 20.

We seek society with very different aims, and the staple of conversation is widely unlike in its circles. Sometimes it is facts, — running from those of daily necessity to the last results of science, — and has all degrees of importance; sometimes it is love, and makes the balm of our early and of our latest days; sometimes it is thought, as from a person who is a mind only; sometimes a singing, as if the heart poured out all like a bird; sometimes experience. Clubs.

But the people are to be taken in very small doses. If solitude is proud, so is society vulgar.

Society and Solitude.

March 19.

March 20.

March 21.

I like a master standing firm on legs of iron, rich, handsome, eloquent, loaded with advantages, drawing all men by fascination into tributaries and supporters of his power. Representative Men.

His tongue was framed to music,
And his hand was armed with skill,
His face was the mould of beauty,
And his heart was the throne of will.

Power.

March 22.

We eat of the bread which grows in the field. We live by the air which blows around us, and we are poisoned by the air that is too cold or too hot, too dry or too wet. Time, which shows so vacant, indivisible, and divine in its coming, is slit and peddled into trifles and tatters. I want wood, or oil, or meal, or salt; the house smokes, or I have a headache — these eat up the hours.

We are instructed by these petty experiences which usurp the hours and years. The hard soil and four months of snow make the inhabitant of the northern temperate zone wiser and abler than his fellow who enjoys the fixed smile of the tropics.

Prudence.

March 21.

March 22.

March 23.

Michael Angelo's head is full of masculine and gigantic figures, as gods walking, which make him savage until his furious chisel can render them into marble; and of architectural dreams, until a hundred stone-masons can lay them in courses of travertine. There is the like tempest in every good head in which some great benefit for the world is planted. Old Age.

Our efficiency depends so much on our concentration, that Nature usually, in the instances where a marked man is sent into the world, overloads him with bias, sacrificing his symmetry to his working power. Culture.

March 24.

The high prize of life, the crowning fortune of a man, is to be born to some pursuit which finds him in employment and happiness, — whether it be to make baskets, or broadswords, or canals, or statutes, or songs. Considerations by the Way.

The distinction and end of a soundly constituted man is his labor. Use is inscribed on all his faculties. Use is the end to which he exists. As the tree exists for its fruit, so a man for his work. A fruitless plant, an idle animal, does not stand in the universe. The Fortune of the Republic.

March 23.

March 24.

March 25.

Some men love only to talk where they are masters. They like to go to school-girls, or to boys, or into the shops where the sauntering people gladly lend an ear to any one. . . . . One of those conceited prigs who value nature only as it feeds and exhibits them, is equally a pest with the roisterers. . . . . Then there are the gladiators, to whom it is always a battle ; 't is no matter on which side, they fight for victory ; then the heady men, the egotists, the monotones, the steriles, and the impracticables.

Clubs.

March 26.

We think a man unable and desponding. It is only that he is misplaced. Put him with new companions, and they will find in him excellent qualities, unsuspected accomplishments, and the joy of life. 'Tis a great point in a gallery, how you hang pictures ; and not less in society, how you seat your party. When a man meets his accurate mate, society begins, and life is delicious. Social Aims.

'T is hard to mesmerize ourselves, to whip our own top ; but through sympathy we are capable of energy and endurance. Concert fires people to a certain fury of performance they can rarely reach alone. Society and Solitude.

MARCH 25.

Sue Risch and John Wade
Married 1913

MARCH 26.

March 27.

Wit makes its own welcome, and levels all distinctions. No dignity, no learning, no force of character, can make any stand against good wit. It is like ice, on which no beauty of form, no majesty of carriage, can plead any immunity — they must walk gingerly, according to the laws of ice, or down they must go, dignity and all. THE COMIC.

The perception of the comic is a tie of sympathy with other men, a pledge of sanity, and a protection from those perverse tendencies and gloomy insanities in which fine intellects sometimes lose themselves. A rogue alive to the ridiculous is still convertible. If that sense is lost, his fellow-men can do little for him. THE COMIC.

March 28.

What a parade we make of our science, and how far off, and at arm's length, it is from its objects! Our botany is all names, not powers: poets and romancers talk of herbs of grace and healing; but what does the botanist know of the virtues of his weeds? BEAUTY.

Go thou to thy learned task,
I stay with the flowers of spring;
Do thou of the ages ask
What me the hours will bring.

BOTANIST.

March 27.

March 28.

March 29.

No way has been found for making heroism easy, even for the scholar. Labor, iron labor, is for him. The world was created as an audience for him; the atoms of which it is made are opportunities. GREATNESS.

Nature is upheld by antagonism. Passions, resistance, danger, are educators. We acquire the strength we have overcome.

CONSIDERATIONS BY THE WAY.

March 30.

Every ultimate fact is only the first of a new series. Every general law only a particular fact of some more general law presently to disclose itself. There is no outside, no inclosing wall, no circumference to us. The man finishes his story, — how good! how final! how it puts a new face on all things! He fills the sky. Lo! on the other side rises also a man, and draws a circle around the circle we had just pronounced the outline of the sphere. CIRCLES.

To insight profounder
Man's spirit must dive;
His aye-rolling orbit
At no goal will arrive;
The heavens that now draw him
With sweetness untold,
Once found, — for new heavens
He spurneth the old. THE SPHINX.

MARCH 29.

Bryant King Farm 1894

MARCH 30.

This is he, who, felled by foes,
Sprung harmless up, refreshed by blows:
He to captivity was sold,
But him no prison-bars would hold:
Though they sealed him in a rock,
Mountain chains he can unlock:
Thrown to lions for their meat,
The crouching lion kissed his feet:
Bound to the stake, no flames appalled,
But arched o'er him an honoring vault.
This is he men miscall Fate,
Threading dark ways, arriving late,
But ever coming in time to crown
The truth, and hurl wrong-doers down.

WORSHIP.

I saw the bud-crowned Spring go forth,
Stepping daily onward north
To greet staid ancient cavaliers
Filing single in stately train.
And who, and who are the travellers?
They were Night and Day, and Day and Night,
Pilgrims wight with step forthright.
I saw the Days deformed and low,
Short and bent by cold and snow;
The merry Spring threw wreaths on them,
Flower-wreaths gay with bud and bell;
Many a flower and many a gem,
They were refreshed by the smell,
They shook the snow from hats and shoon,
They put their April raiment on. MAY-DAY.

April 1.

I have heard, that, whenever the name of man is spoken, the doctrine of immortality is announced; it cleaves to his constitution. The mode of it baffles our wit, and no whisper comes to us from the other side. But the inference from the working of intellect, hiving knowledge, hiving skill, — at the end of life just ready to be born, — affirms the inspirations of affection and of the moral sentiment. OLD AGE.

Step by step lifts bad to good,
Without halting, without rest,
Lifting Better up to Best,
Planting seeds of knowledge pure,
Through earth to ripen, through heaven endure.
MAY-DAY.

April 2.

But, through every clause and part of speech of a right book, I meet the eyes of the most determined of men; his force and terror inundate every word: the commas and dashes are alive; so that the writing is athletic and nimble, — can go far and live long. . . . . It makes a great difference to the force of any sentence, whether there be a man behind it, or no. REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

April 1.

April 2.

April 3.

Herbert is the psalmist dear to all who love religious poetry, with exquisite refinement of thought. So much piety was never married to so much wit. Herbert identifies himself with Jewish genius, as Michael Angelo did when carving or painting prophets and patriarchs, not merely old men in robes and beards, but with the sanctity and the character of the Pentateuch and the prophecy conspicuous in them. His wit and his piety are genuine, and are sure to make a lifelong friend of a good reader.

PARNASSUS.

April 4.

Tobacco, coffee, alcohol, hashish, prussic acid, strychnine, are weak dilutions: the surest poison is time. This cup, which Nature puts to our lips, has a wonderful virtue, surpassing that of any other draught. It opens the senses, adds power, fills us with exalted dreams, which we call hope, love, ambition, science: especially, it creates a craving for larger draughts of itself.

OLD AGE.

For me, in showers, in sweeping showers, the spring
Visits the valley; — break away the clouds, —
I bathe in the morn's soft and silvered air,
And loiter willing by yon loitering stream.

MUSKETAQUID

April 3.

George Herbert, 1593.

April 4.

April 5.

We cannot write the order of the variable winds. How can we penetrate the law of our shifting moods and susceptibility? Illusions.

The sparrow meek, prophetic-eyed,
Her nest beside the snow-drift weaves,
Secure the osier yet will hide
Her callow brood with mantling leaves, —
And thou, by science all undone,
Why only must thy reason fail
To see the southing of the sun? May-Day

April 6.

It is singular that wherever we find a man higher, by a whole head, than any of his contemporaries, it is sure to come into doubt, what are his real works. Thus, Homer, Plato, Raffaelle, Shakespeare. For these men magnetize their contemporaries, so that their companions can do for them what they can never do for themselves; and the great man does thus live in several bodies, and write, or paint, or act, by many hands: and, after some time, it is not easy to say what is the authentic work of the master, and what is only of his school. Representative Men.

April 6.

Raffaelle Sanzio, 1483.

April 7.

Who reads Wordsworth well will know, that in following the strong bent of his genius he was careless of the many, careless also of the few, self-assured that he should "create the taste by which he is to be enjoyed." He lived long enough to witness the revolution he had wrought, and "to see what he foresaw." . . . . Let us say of him, that, alone in his time he treated the human mind well, and with an absolute trust. His adherence to his poetic creed rested on real inspirations. The Ode on Immortality is the high water mark which the intellect has reached in this age. New means were employed, and new realms added to the empire of the muse, by his courage.

English Traits.

April 8.

Our Copernican globe is a great factory or shop of power, with its rotating constellations, times, and tides. . . . . The vat, the piston, the wheels and tires, never wear out, but are self-repairing. Is there any load which water cannot lift? If there be, try steam; or if not that, try electricity. Is there any exhausting of these means? Measure by barrels the spending of the brook that runs through your field. Nothing is great but the inexhaustible wealth of Nature. She shows us only surfaces, but she is million fathoms deep. Resources.

April 7.

William Wordsworth, 1770.

April 8.

April 9.

The farmer is covetous of his dollar, and with reason. It is no waif to him. He knows how many strokes of labor it represents. His bones ache with the day's work that earned it. He knows how much land it represents; — how much rain, frost, and sunshine. He knows that, in the dollar, he gives you so much discretion and patience, so much hoeing and threshing. Try to lift his dollar; you must lift all that weight. In the city, where money follows the skit of a pen, or a lucky rise in exchange, it comes to be looked on as light.

WEALTH.

April 10.

Thought dissolves the material universe, by carrying the mind up into a sphere where all is plastic. Of two men, each obeying his own thought, he whose thought is deepest will be the strongest character. Always one man more than another represents the will of Divine Providence to the period.

FATE.

For it is on zodiacs writ,
Adamant is soft to wit:
And when the greater comes again
With my secret in his brain,
I shall pass, as glides my shadow
Daily over hill and meadow.

MONADNOCK.

April 10.

Mrs. Y. L. Winthrop
Rogers 1929 -

April 11.

We have a pretty artillery of tools now in our social arrangements: we ride four times as fast as our fathers did; travel, grind, weave, forge, plant, till, and excavate better. . . . . We have the calculus; we have the newspaper, which does its best to make every square acre of land and sea give an account of itself at your breakfast-table; we have money, and paper money; we have language, the finest tool of all and nearest to the mind.

Works and Days.

April 12.

I find the gayest castles in the air that were ever piled, far better for comfort and for use, than the dungeons in the air that are daily dug and caverned out by grumbling, discontented people. . . . . A man should make life and Nature happier to us, or he had better never been born. When the political economist reckons up the unproductive classes, he should put at the head this class of pitiers of themselves, cravers of sympathy, bewailing imaginary disasters. An old French verse runs, in my translation: —

"Some of your griefs you have cured,
And the sharpest you still have survived;
But what torments of pain you endured
From evils that never arrived!"

Considerations by the Way.

April 12.

Miss Janet Dewar

April 13.

Who are the farmer's servants? Not the Irish, nor the coolies, but Geology and Chemistry, the quarry of the air, the water of the brook, the lightning of the cloud, the castings of the worm, the plough of the frost. Old Age.

Time and Thought were my surveyors,
They laid their courses well,
They poured the sea, and baked the layers
Of granite, marl, and shell.

Song of Nature.

April 14.

The frost which kills the harvest of a year, saves the harvests of a century, by destroying the weevil or the locust. Wars, fires, plagues, break up immovable routine, clear the ground of rotten races and dens of distemper, and open a fair field to new men. There is a tendency in things to right themselves, and the war or revolution or bankruptcy that shatters a rotten system, allows things to take a new and natural order.

Considerations by the Way.

Liberation of the will from the sheaths and clogs of organization, which man has outgrown, is the end and aim of this world. Every calamity is a spur and valuable hint. Fate.

April 15.

Nature avenges herself speedily on the hard pedantry that would chain her waves. She is no literalist. Everything must be taken genially, and we must be at the top of our condition, to understand anything rightly. Representative Men.

Onward and on, the eternal Pan,
Who layeth the world's incessant plan,
Halteth never in one shape,
But forever doth escape,
Like wave or flame, into new forms
Of gem, and air, of plants, and worms.
Woodnotes.

April 16.

We wake and find ourselves on a stair: there are stairs below us, which we seem to have ascended; there are stairs above us, many a one, which go upward and out of sight. But the Genius which, according to the old belief, stands at the door by which we enter, and gives us the lethe to drink, that we may tell no tales, mixed the cup too strongly, and we cannot shake off the lethargy now at noonday. Sleep lingers all our lifetime about our eyes, as night hovers all day in the boughs of the fir-tree. Experience.

April 15.

April 16.

Howard Gardner Mitchell
1871-1896

April 17.

Here is the world, round as a nut, perfect, not the smallest piece of chaos left, nor a stitch nor an end, not a mark of haste or botching or second thought. Representative Men.

There is not a piece of nature in any kind, but a man is born, who, as his genius opens, aims slower or faster to dedicate himself to that. Then there is the poet, the philosopher, the politician, the orator, the clergyman, the physician. 'T is gratifying to see this adaptation of man to the world, and to every part and particle of it. Greatness.

April 18.

Upborne and surrounded as we are by this all-creating nature, soft and fluid as a cloud or the air, why should we be such hard pedants, and magnify a few forms? Heroism.

Once again the pine-tree sung: —
Speak not thy speech my boughs among;
Put off thy years, wash in the breeze;
My hours are peaceful centuries.
Talk no more with feeble tongue;
No more the fool of space and time,
Come weave with mine a nobler rhyme.
Woodnotes.

April 17.

April 18.

April 19.

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

. . . . . .

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and Thee.

Concord Fight.

April 20.

We love any forms, however ugly, from which great qualities shine. If command, eloquence, art, or invention exist in the most deformed person, all the accidents that usually displease please, and raise esteem and wonder higher. . . . . Every spirit makes its house, and we can give a shrewd guess from the house to the inhabitant. Beauty.

Meantime, be it remembered, we are artists ourselves, and competitors, each one, with Phidias and Raphael in the production of what is graceful or grand. Art.

April 19.

Lexington and Concord, 1775.

April 20.

April 21.

Nature never hurries: atom by atom, little by little, she achieves her work. The lesson one learns in fishing, yachting, hunting, or planting, is the manners of Nature; patience with the delays of wind and sun, delays of the seasons, bad weather, excess or lack of water. FARMING

Why chidest thou the tardy Spring?
The hardy bunting does not chide;
The blackbirds make the maples ring
With social cheer and jubilee;
The red-wing flutes his *o-ka-lee*,
The robins know the melting snow.

MAY-DAY.

April 22.

Cities give us collision. . . . . A great part of our education is sympathetic and social. . . . . You cannot have one well-bred man, without a whole society of such. They keep each other up to any high point. Especially women; — it requires a great many cultivated women, — saloons of bright, reading women, accustomed to ease and refinement, to spectacles, pictures, sculpture, poetry, and to elegant society, in order that you should have one Madame de Staël. CULTURE.

APRIL 21.

Beloved Grace died in Washington

APRIL 22.

Madame de Staël, 1766

April 23.

Of Shakespeare what can we say, but that he is and remains an exceptional mind in the world; that a universal poetry began and ended with him; and that mankind have required the three hundred years since his birth to familiarize themselves with his supreme genius? PARNASSUS.

Shakespeare is as much out of the category of eminent authors, as he is out of the crowd. He is inconceivably wise; the others, conceivably. A good reader can, in a sort, nestle into Plato's brain, and think from thence; but not into Shakespeare's. We are still out of doors. . . . . He is wise without emphasis or assertion; he is strong, as Nature is strong, who lifts the land into mountain slopes without effort, and by the same rule as she floats a bubble in the air, and likes as well to do the one as the other. REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

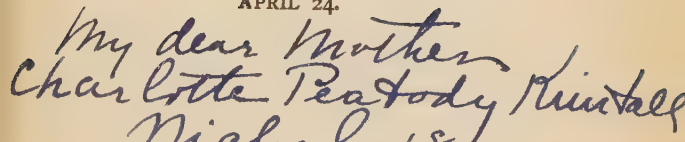
April 24.

I cannot even hear of personal vigor of any kind, great power of performance, without fresh resolution. We are emulous of all that man can do. Cecil's saying of Sir Walter Raleigh, "I know that he can toil terribly," is an electric touch. . . . . We cannot read Plutarch without a tingling of the blood. REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

April 23.

Shakespeare, 1564.

April 24.



April 25.

Deep in the man sits fast his fate
To mould his fortunes mean or great:
Unknown to Cromwell as to me
Was Cromwell's measure or degree. . . . .
He works, plots, fights, in rude affairs,
With squires, lords, kings, his craft compares,
Till late he learned, through doubt and fear,
Broad England harbored not his peer:
Obeying time, the last to own
The Genius from its cloudy throne. FATE.

April 26.

He who aims high, must dread an easy home and popular manners. . . . . If there is any great and good thing in store for you, it will not come at the first or the second call. . . . . "Steep and craggy," said Porphyry, "is the path of the gods." Open your Marcus Antoninus. In the opinion of the ancients, he was the great man who scorned to shine, and who contested the frowns of fortune. They preferred the noble vessel too late for the tide, contending with winds and waves, dismantled and unrigged, to her companion borne into harbor with colors flying and guns firing. There are none of the social goods that may not be purchased too dear, and mere amiableness must not take rank with high aims and self-subsistency. CULTURE.

April 25.

Oliver Cromwell, 1599.

April 26.

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. 121

April 27.

For every grain of wit there is a grain of folly. For everything you have missed, you have gained something else; and for everything you gain, you lose something. . . . . If the gatherer gathers too much, nature takes out of the man what she puts into his chest; swells the estate, but kills the owner. Nature hates monopolies and exceptions.

COMPENSATION.

The wings of Time are black and white,
Pied with morning and with night.
Mountains tall and ocean deep
Trembling balance duly keep.

COMPENSATION.

April 28.

Physical force has no value where there is nothing else. Snow in snow-banks, fire in volcanoes and solfataras is cheap. The luxury of ice is in tropical countries, and midsummer days. The luxury of fire is, to have a little on our hearth: and of electricity, not volleys of the charged cloud, but the manageable stream on the battery wires. So of spirit, or energy; the rest or remains of it in the civil or moral man, are worth all the cannibals in the Pacific.

POWER.

April 27.

April 28.

April 29.

I count him a great man who inhabits a higher sphere of thought, into which other men rise with labor and difficulty; he has but to open his eyes to see things in a true light, and in large relations; whilst they must make painful corrections, and keep a vigilant eye on many sources of error. . . . . He is great who is what he is from nature, and who never reminds us of others.

Representative Men.

April 30.

Ah! well I mind the calendar,
Faithful through a thousand years,
Of the painted race of flowers,
Exact to days, exact to hours,
Counted on the spacious dial
Yon broidered zodiac girds.
I know the trusty almanac
Of the punctual coming-back,
On their due days, of the birds.
I marked them yestermorn,
A flock of finches darting
Beneath the crystal arch,
Piping, as they flew, a march, —
Belike the one they used in parting.

May-Day.

April 29.

April 30.

April cold with dropping rain
Willows and lilacs brings again,
The whistle of returning birds,
And trumpet-lowing of the herds;
The scarlet maple-keys betray
What potent blood hath modest May;
What fiery force the earth renews,
The wealth of forms, the flush of hues;
What Joy in rosy waves outpoured,
Flows from the heart of Love, the Lord.

MAY-DAY

May.

WHERE shall we keep the holiday,
And duly greet the entering May?
Too strait and low our cottage doors,
And all unmeet our carpet floors;
Nor spacious court, nor monarch's hall
Suffice to hold the festival.
Up and away! where haughty woods
Front the liberated floods:
We will climb the broad-backed hills,
Hear the uproar of their joy;
We will mark the leaps and gleams
Of the new-delivered streams,
And the murmuring rivers of sap
Mount in the pipes of the trees,
Giddy with day, to the topmost spire,
Which for a spike of tender green
Bartered its powdery cap;
And the colors of joy in the bird,
And the love in its carol heard,
Frog and lizard in holiday coats,
And turtle brave in his golden spots;
While cheerful cries from crag and plain
Reply to the thunder of river and main.

MAY-DAY.

May 1.

Wreaths for the May! for happy Spring
To-day shall all her dowry bring, —
The love of kind, the joy, the grace,
Hymen of element and race,
Knowing well to celebrate
With song and hue and star and state,
With tender light and youthful cheer,
The spousals of the new-born year.

May-Day.

May 2.

Are there not women who fill our vase with wine and roses to the brim, so that the wine runs over and fills the house with perfume; who inspire us with courtesy; who unloose our tongues, and we speak; who anoint our eyes, and we see? We say things we never thought to have said; for once, our walls of habitual reserve vanished, and left us at large; we were children playing with children in a wide field of flowers. Steep us, we cried, in these influences, for days, for weeks, and we shall be sunny poets, and will write out in many-colored words the romance that you are. Manners.

May 1.

May 2.

May 3.

I awoke this morning with devout thanksgiving for my friends, the old and the new. Shall I not call God the Beautiful, who daily showeth himself so to me in his gifts? FRIENDSHIP.

Onward and nearer rides the sun of May;
And wide around, the marriage of the plants
Is sweetly solemnized. Then flows amain
The surge of summer's beauty; dell and crag,
Hollow and lake, hillside, and pine arcade,
Are touched with genius. Yonder ragged cliff
Has thousand faces in a thousand hours.

MUSKATAQUID.

May 4.

The farmer times himself to Nature, and acquires that livelong patience which belongs to her. Slow, narrow man, his rule is, that the earth shall feed and clothe him; and he must wait for his crop to grow. FARMING

So, year by year,
They fight the elements with elements,
(That one would say, meadow and forest walked,
Transmuted in these men to rule their like,)
And by the order in the field disclose
The order regnant in the yeoman's brain.

MUSKATAQUID.

May 3.

May 4.

May 5.

Curiosity is lying in wait for every secret. The inquisitiveness of the child to hear runs to meet the eagerness of the parent to explain. The air does not rush to fill a vacuum with such speed as the mind to catch the expected fact. Every artist was first an amateur. The ear outgrows the tongue, is sooner ripe and perfect; but the tongue is always learning to say what the ear has taught it, and the hand obeys the same lesson.

Progress of Culture.

May 6.

The Muse of men is coy,
Oft courted will not come;
In palaces and market-squares
Entreated, she is dumb;
But my minstrel knows and tells
The counsel of the gods,

. . . . . .

He renders all his lore
In numbers wild as dreams,
Modulating all extremes, —
What the spangled meadow saith
To the children who have faith;
Only to children children sing,
Only to youth will spring be spring.

The Harp.

May 5.

May 6.

May 7.

We see, now, events forced on, which seem to retard or retrograde the civility of ages. But the world-spirit is a good swimmer, and storms and waves cannot drown him. He snaps his finger at laws: and so, throughout history, heaven seems to affect low and poor means. Through the years and centuries, through evil agents, through toys and the atoms, a great and beneficent tendency irresistibly streams. REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

And where it comes this courier fleet
Fans in all hearts expectance sweet,
As if to-morrow should redeem
The vanished rose of evening's dream.
MAY-DAY.

May 8.

Daughter of Heaven and Earth, coy Spring,
With sudden passion languishing,
Teaching barren moors to smile,
Painting pictures mile on mile,
Holds a cup of cowslip-wreaths
Whence a smokeless incense breathes.
MAY-DAY.

May 7.

May 8.

May 9.

The world is not made up to the eye of figures — that is, only half; it is also made of color. How that element washes the universe with its enchanting waves! The sculptor had ended his work, and behold a new world of dream-like glory. 'T is the last stroke of Nature; beyond color she cannot go. In like manner, life is made up, not of knowledge only, but of love also.

The hues of sunset make life great; so the affections make some little web of cottage and fireside populous, important, and filling the main space in our history. SUCCESS.

May 10.

Spring is strong and virtuous,
Broad-sowing, cheerful, plenteous,
Quickening underneath the mould
Grains beyond the price of gold.
So deep and large her bounties are,
That one broad, long midsummer day
Shall to the planet overpay
The ravage of a year of war. MAY-DAY.

May 10.

Louise R. McClean
1880–

May 11.

Nature works on a method of *all for each, and each for all.* The strain that is made on one point bears on every arch and foundation of the structure. There is a perfect solidarity. You cannot detach an atom from its holdings, or strip off from it the electricity, gravitation, chemic affinity, or the relation to light and heat, and leave the atom bare. No, it brings with it its universal ties.

FARMING.

May 12.

There is the boy who is born with a taste for the sea, and must go thither if he has to run away from his father's house to the forecastle; another longs for travel in foreign lands; another will be a lawyer; another, an astronomer; another, a painter, sculptor, architect, or engineer. . . . . Every individual man has a bias which he must obey, and it is only as he feels and obeys this that he rightly develops and attains his legitimate power in the world.

GREATNESS.

By fate, not option, frugal Nature gave
One scent to hyson and to wall-flower,
One sound to pine-groves and to waterfalls,
One aspect to the desert and the lake.
It was her stern necessity.

XENOPHANES.

MAY 12.

May 13.

In one of those celestial days, when heaven and earth meet and adorn each other, it seems a poverty that we can only spend it once: we wish for a thousand heads, a thousand bodies, that we might celebrate its immense beauty in many ways and places. REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

Soft on the south-wind sleeps the haze:
So on thy broad mystic van
Lie the opal-colored days,
And waft the miracle to man. MAY-DAY.

May 14.

Our conversation with Nature is not just what it seems. The cloud-rack, the sunrise and sunset glories, rainbows, and northern lights are not quite so spheral as our childhood thought them; and the part our organization plays in them is too large.
ILLUSIONS.

What art can paint or gild any object in after-life with the glow which Nature gives to the first baubles of childhood! St. Peter's cannot have the magical power over us that the red and gold covers of our first picture-book possessed.
DOMESTIC LIFE.

May 13.

May 14.

May 15.

There are prose poets. Thomas Taylor, the Platonist, for instance, is really a better man of imagination, a better poet, or perhaps I should say a better feeder to a poet, than any man between Milton and Wordsworth. . . . . Every good reader will easily recall expressions or passages in works of pure science which have given him the same pleasure which he seeks in professed poets.

Poetry and Imagination.

May 16.

There is no bard in all the choir, ...
Not one of all can put in verse,
Or to this presence could rehearse,
The sights and voices ravishing
The boy knew on the hills in spring,
When pacing through the oaks he heard
Sharp queries of the sentry-bird,
The heavy grouse's sudden whir,
The rattle of the kingfisher; . . . .
Or marked, benighted and forlorn,
The first far signal-fire of morn.
These syllables that Nature spoke,
And the thoughts that in him woke,
Can adequately utter none
Save to his ear the wind-harp lone.

The Harp.

May 15.

Thomas Taylor, "The Platonist," 1758.

May 16.

Helen Campbell Smith

May 17.

Moments of insight, of fine personal relation, a smile, a glance, — what ample borrowers of eternity they are! Life culminates and concentrates.

Works and Days.

'T was one of the charméd days,
When the genius of God doth flow,
The wind may alter twenty ways,
A tempest cannot blow;
It may blow north, it still is warm;
Or south, it still is clear;
Or east, it smells like a clover-farm;
Or west, no thunder fear. Woodnotes.

May 18.

Nature is the true idealist. When she serves us best, when, on rare days, she speaks to the imagination, we feel that the huge heaven and earth are but a web drawn around us, that the light, skies, and mountains are but the painted vicissitudes of the soul. Who has heard our hymn in the churches without accepting the truth, —

"As o'er our heads the seasons roll,
And soothe with *change of bliss* the soul?"

Poetry and Imagination.

May 17.

May 18.

May 19.

In the plant, the eye or germinative point opens to a leaf, then to another leaf, with a power of transforming the leaf into radicle, stamen, pistil, petal, bract, sepal, or seed. The whole art of the plant is still to repeat leaf on leaf without end, the more or less of heat, light, moisture, and food determining the form it shall assume. Nature iterates her means perpetually on successive planes.

Representative Men.

May 20.

When the south-wind, in May days,
With a net of shining haze
Silvers the horizon wall,
And, with softness touching all,
Tints the human countenance
With a color of romance,
And, infusing subtle heats,
Turns the sod to violets,
Thou, in sunny solitudes,
Rover of the underwoods,
The green silence dost displace
With thy mellow, breezy bass.

The Humblebee.

MAY 19.

MAY 20.

May 21.

Plato is philosophy, and philosophy, Plato, — at once the glory and the shame of mankind, since neither Saxon nor Roman have availed to add any idea to his categories. No wife, no children had he, and the thinkers of all civilized nations are his posterity, and are tinged with his mind. How many great men Nature is incessantly sending up out of night, to be *his men*, — Platonists! . . . . An Englishman reads and says, "how English!" a German, — "how Teutonic!" an Italian, — "how Roman and how Greek!" . . . . His broad humanity transcends all sectional lines.

Representative Men.

May 22.

There are two classes of poets, — the poets by education and practice, these we respect; and poets by nature, these we love. Pope is the best type of the one class: he had all the advantage that taste and wit could give him, but never rose to grandeur or to pathos. Parnassus.

I looked into Pope's "Odyssey" yesterday: it is as correct and elegant after our canon of to-day, as if it were newly written. The modernness of all good books seems to give me an existence as wide as man. What is well done, I feel as if I did; what is ill done I reck not of.

Nominalist and Realist.

May 21.

Plato, B. C. 429.

May 22.

Alexander Pope, 1688.

May 23.

The world is an immense picture-book of every passage in human life. The lover sees reminders of his mistress in every beautiful object; the saint, an argument for devotion in every natural process; and the facility with which Nature lends itself to the thoughts of man, the aptness with which a river, a flower, a bird, fire, day or night can express his fortunes, is as if the world were only a disguised man, and, with a change of form, rendered to him all his experience.

POETRY AND IMAGINATION.

May 24.

The caged linnet in the spring
Hearkens for the choral glee,
When his fellows on the wing
Migrate from the Southern Sea,
When trellised grapes their flowers unmask,
And the new-born tendrils twine,
The old wine darkling in the cask
Feels the bloom on the living vine.

. . . . . .

And even when the happy child . . . .
Hears in heaven the bluebird sing,
"Onward," he cries, "your baskets bring, —
In the next field is air more mild,
And o'er yon hazy crest is Eden's balmier spring."

MAY-DAY.

May 23.

May 24.

May 25.

It is the best sign of a great nature, that it opens a foreground, and, like the breath of morning landscapes, invites us onward. Representative Men.

I await the bard and sage,
Who, in large thoughts, like fair pearl-seed,
Shall string Monadnock like a bead. . . . .
When he cometh, I shall shed,
From this wellspring in my head,
Fountain-drop of spicier worth
Than all vintage of the earth.
There 's fruit upon my barren soil
Costlier far than wine or oil. . . . .
I will give my son to eat
Best of Pan's immortal meat,
Bread to eat, and juice to drain,
So the coinage of his brain
Shall not be forms of stars, but stars,
Nor pictures pale, but Jove and Mars.

Monadnock.

May 26.

We are natural believers. Truth, or the connection between cause and effect, alone interests us. We are persuaded that a thread runs through all things: all worlds are strung on it, as beads: and men, and events, and life, come to us, only because of that thread: they pass and repass, only that we may know the direction and continuity of that line.

Representative Men.

May 25.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803.

May 26.

May 27.

Poetry is the only verity, — the expression of a sound mind speaking after the ideal, and not after the apparent. As a power it is the perception of the symbolic character of things, and the treating them as representative, ... and by the treatment demonstrating that this pigment of thought is as palpable and objective to the poet as is the ground on which he stands. . . . . And this power appears in Dante and Shakespeare.

POETRY AND IMAGINATION.

So I folded me in fears,
And DANTE searched the triple spheres,
Moulding nature at his will,
So shaped, so colored, swift or still,
And, sculptor-like, his large design
Etched on Alp and Apennine. SOLUTION.

May 28.

Nature is loved by what is best in us. It is loved as the city of God, although, or rather because there is no citizen. NATURE.

River, and rose, and crag, and bird,
Frost, and sun, and eldest night,
To me their aid preferred,
To me their comfort plight.

HERMIONE.

May 27.

Dante Alighieri, 1265.

May 28.

May 29.

Any man who puts his life in peril in a cause which is esteemed becomes the darling of all men. The very nursery-books, the ballads which delight boys, the romances which delight men, the favorite topics of eloquence . . . . which the people greet, may testify. COURAGE.

But best befriended of the God
He who, in evil times,
Warned by an inward voice,
Heeds not the darkness and the dread,
Biding by his rule and choice,
Feeling only the fiery thread
Leading over heroic ground,
Walled with mortal terror round,
To the aim which him allures,
And the sweet heaven his deed secures.
VOLUNTARIES.

May 30.

Stainless soldier on the walls,
Knowing this, — and knows no more, —
Whoever fights, whoever falls,
Justice conquers evermore,
Justice after as before, —
And he who battles on her side,
God, though he were ten times slain,
Crowns him victor glorified,
Victor over death and pain. VOLUNTARIES.

May 30.

Decoration Day.

Live in the sunshine, swim the sea,
Drink the wild air's salubrity :
Where the star Canope shines in May,
Shepherds are thankful, and nations gay.
The music that can deepest reach,
And cure all ill, is cordial speech :
Mask thy wisdom with delight,
Toy with the bow, yet hit the white.
Of all wit's uses, the main one
Is to live well with who has none.
Cleave to thine acre ; the round year
Will fetch all fruits and virtues here :
Fool and foe may harmless roam,
Loved and lovers bide at home.
A day for toil, an hour for sport,
But for a friend is life too short.

CONSIDERATIONS BY THE WAY.

THE RHODORA.

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,
Made the black water with their beauty gay;
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being:
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask, I never knew:
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose
The self-same Power that brought me there brought
you.

June.

HITHER rolls the storm of heat;
I feel its finer billows beat
Like a sea which me infolds;
Heat with viewless fingers moulds,
Swells, and mellows, and matures,
Paints, and flavors, and allures,
Bird and brier inly warms,
Still enriches and transforms,
Gives the reed and lily length,
Adds to oak and oxen strength,
Transforming what it doth infold,
Life out of death, new out of old.

MAY-DAY

June 1.

An everlasting Now reigns in Nature, which hangs the same roses on our bushes which charmed the Roman and the Chaldæan in their hanging gardens. WORKS AND DAYS.

And ever by delicate powers
Gathering along the centuries
From race on race the rarest flowers,
My wreath shall nothing miss.

And many a thousand summers
My harvests ripened well,
And light from meliorating stars
With firmer glory fell. SONG OF NATURE.

June 2.

There are deceptions of the senses, deceptions of the passions, and the structural, beneficent illusions of sentiment and of the intellect. There is the illusion of love, which attributes to the beloved person all which that person shares with his or her family, sex, age, or condition, — nay, with the human mind itself. 'T is these which the lover loves. ILLUSIONS.

How sweet the west-wind sounds in my own trees!
How graceful climb those shadows on my hill!
I fancy these pure waters and the flags
Know me, as does my dog! HAMATREYA

June 1.

June 2.

June 3.

Every genuine work of art has as much reason for being as the earth and the sun. The gayest charm of beauty has a root in the constitution of things.

ART.

Know'st thou what wove yon woodbird's nest
Of leaves, and feathers from her breast?
Or how the fish outbuilt her shell,
Painting with morn each annual cell?
Or how the sacred pine-tree adds
To her old leaves new myriads?
Such and so grew these holy piles,
Whilst love and terror laid the tiles.

THE PROBLEM.

June 4.

All high beauty has a moral element in it, and I find the antique sculpture as ethical as Marcus Antoninus, and the beauty ever in proportion to the depth of thought. Gross and obscure natures, however decorated, seem impure shambles; but character gives splendor to youth, and awe to wrinkled skin and gray hairs. An adorer of truth we cannot choose but obey, and the woman who has shared with us the moral sentiment — her locks must appear to us sublime.

BEAUTY.

June 3.

June 4.

June 5.

This hard-headed humorist, whose strange conceits, drollery, and *bonhommie* diverted the young patricians, whilst the rumor of his sayings and quibbles gets abroad every day, turns out, in the sequel, to have a probity as invincible as his logic.

The rare coincidence, in one ugly body, of the droll and the martyr, the keen street and market debater with the sweetest saint known to any history at that time, had forcibly struck the mind of Plato; and the figure of Socrates, by a necessity, placed itself in the foreground of the scene, as the fittest dispenser of the intellectual treasures he had to communicate. . . . . Socrates and Plato are the double star, which the most powerful instruments will not entirely separate. REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

June 6.

The sun set, but set not his hope:
Stars rose; his faith was earlier up: . . . .
And matched his sufferance sublime
The taciturnity of time.
He spoke, and words more soft than rain
Brought the Age of Gold again:
His action won such reverence sweet
As hid all measure of the feat.

CHARACTER.

June 5.

Socrates, 469 B. C.

June 6.

June 7.

Long before he was born, the sun of ages decomposed the rocks, mellowed his land, soaked it with light and heat, covered it with vegetable film, then with forests, and accumulated the sphagnum whose decays made the peat. FARMING

And the world's sun seemed to rise
To drudge all day for Guy the wise. . . . .
There was no frost but welcome came,
Nor freshet nor midsummer flame.
Belonged to wind and world the toil
And venture, and to Guy the oil. GUY.

June 8.

Every act of the man inscribes itself in the memories of his fellows, and in his own manners and face. The air is full of sounds, the sky of tokens; the ground is all memoranda and signatures, and every object covered over with hints, which speak to the intelligent. REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

The youth reads omens where he goes,
And speaks all languages the rose.
The wood-fly mocks with tiny noise
The far halloo of human voice;
The perfumed berry on the spray
Smacks of faint memories far away.
MAY-DAY.

June 7.

June 8.

June 9.

'T is a good rule in every journey to provide some piece of liberal study to rescue the hours which bad weather, bad company, and taverns steal from the best economist. Classics which at home are drowsily read have a strange charm in a country inn, or in the transom of a merchant brig. I remember that some of the happiest and most valuable hours I have owed to books, passed, many years ago, on shipboard. English Traits.

June 10.

Nature is a rag-merchant, who works up every shred and ort and end into new creations.

Beauty.

I wrote the past in characters
Of rock and fire the scroll,
The building in the coral sea,
The planting of the coal.

And thefts from satellites and rings
And broken stars I drew,
And out of spent and aged things
I formed the world anew.

Song of Nature.

June 9.

June 10.

June 11.

To the modern reader Ben Jonson's plays have lost their old attraction; but his occasional poems are full of heroic thought, and his songs are among the best in the language. His life interests us from the wonderful circle of companions with whom he lived, — with Camden, Shakespeare, Beaumont, Fletcher, Bacon, Chapman, Herbert, Herrick, Cowley, Suckling, Drayton, Donne, Carew, Selden, — and by whom he was honored. PARNASSUS.

June 12.

Lavish, lavish promiser,
Nigh persuading gods to err!
Guest of million painted forms,
Which in turn thy glory warms!
The frailest leaf, the mossy bark,
The acorn's cup, the raindrop's arc,
The swinging spider's silver line,
The ruby of the drop of wine,
The shining pebble of the pond,
Thou inscribest with a bond,
In thy momentary play,
Would bankrupt nature to repay.

ODE TO BEAUTY.

June 11.

Ben Jonson, 1574.

June 12.

June 13.

Many facts concur to show that we must look deeper for our salvation than to steam, photographs, balloons, or astronomy. These tools have some questionable properties. They are reagents. Machinery is aggressive. The weaver becomes a web, the machinist a machine. If you do not use the tools, they use you. All tools are in one sense edge-tools, and dangerous. A man builds a fine house; and now he has a master, and a task for life: he is to furnish, watch, show it, and keep it in repair, the rest of his days. Works and Days.

June 14.

A rush of thoughts is the only conceivable prosperity that can come to us. Fine clothes, equipages, villa, park, social consideration, cannot cover up real poverty and insignificance.

Inspiration.

Why need I volumes, if one word suffice?
Why need I galleries, when a pupil's draught
After the master's sketch fills and o'erfills
My apprehension? why seek Italy,
Who cannot circumnavigate the sea
Of thoughts and things at home, but still adjourn
The nearest matters for a thousand days?

The Day's Ration.

June 13.

June 14.

June 15.

There is not a property in nature but a mind is born to seek and find it. For it is not the plants or the animals, innumerable as they are, nor the whole magazine of material nature, that can give the sum of power, but the infinite applicability of these things in the hands of thinking man, every new application being equivalent to a new material.

And what is a weed? A plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered.

Fortune of the Republic.

June 16.

The world globes itself in a drop of dew. The microscope cannot find the animalcule which is less perfect for being little. Eyes, ears, taste, smell, motion, resistance, appetite, and organs of reproduction that take hold on eternity, — all find room to consist in the small creature. So do we put our life into every act.

Compensation.

For Nature beats in perfect tune,
And rounds with rhyme her every rune,
Whether she work in land or sea,
Or hide underground her alchemy.

Woodnotes.

June 15.

June 16.

JUNE 17.

'T is said courage is common, but the immense esteem in which it is held proves it to be rare. Animal resistance is, no doubt, common; but the pure article, courage with eyes, courage with conduct, self-possession at the cannon's mouth, cheerfulness in lonely adherence to the right, is the endowment of elevated characters. I need not show how much it is esteemed, for the people give it the first rank. They forgive everything to it. What an ado we make through two thousand years about Thermopylæ and Salamis! What a memory of Poitiers and Crecy, and Bunker Hill, and Washington's endurance!

COURAGE.

JUNE 18.

Here was an experiment, under the most favorable conditions, of the powers of intellect without conscience. Never was such a leader so endowed and so weaponed; never leader found such aids and followers. And what was the result of this vast talent and power, of these immolated millions of men, of this demoralized Europe? It came to no result. All passed away, like the smoke of his artillery, and left no trace. He left France smaller, poorer, feebler, than he found it; and the whole contest for freedom was to be begun again.

It was the nature of things, the eternal law of the man and the world, which balked and ruined him.

REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

June 17.

Bunker Hill, 1775.

June 18.

Waterloo, 1815.

June 19.

The beautiful laws of time and space, once dislocated by our inaptitude, are holes and dens. If the hive be disturbed by rash and stupid hands, instead of honey, it will yield us bees. Our words and actions, to be fair, must be timely. A gay and pleasant sound is the whetting of the scythe in the mornings of June; yet what is more lonesome and sad than the sound of a whetstone or mower's rifle, when it is too late in the season to make hay?

PRUDENCE.

June 20.

These roses under my window make no reference to former roses or to better ones; they are for what they are; they exist with God to-day. There is no time to them. There is simply the rose; it is perfect in every moment of its existence. Before a leaf-bud has burst, its whole life acts; in the full-blown flower there is no more; in the leafless root there is no less.

SELF-RELIANCE.

The bitter-sweet, the haunting air
Creepeth, bloweth everywhere;
It preys on all, all prey on it,
Blooms in beauty, thinks in wit,
Stings the strong with enterprise,
Makes travellers long for Indian skies.

MAY-DAY.

JUNE 20.

Charlotte & Ned married at Grace Church Newton 1903 -

June 21.

Thus the pleasure that a noble temple gives us is only in part owing to the temple. It is exalted by the beauty of sunlight, the play of the clouds, the landscape around it, its grouping with the houses, trees, and towers in its vicinity. Art.

I thought the sparrow's note from heaven,
Singing at dawn on the alder bough ;
I brought him home, in his nest, at even ;
He sings the song, but it cheers not now,
For I did not bring home the river and sky ; —
He sang to my ear, — they sang to my eye.

Each in All.

June 22.

Our proclivity to details cannot quite degrade our life, and divest it of poetry. The day laborer is reckoned as standing at the foot of the social scale, yet he is saturated with the laws of the world. His measures are the hours ; morning and night, solstice and equinox, geometry, astronomy, and all the lovely accidents of nature play through his mind. Money, which represents the prose of life, and which is hardly spoken of in parlors without an apology, is, in its effects and laws, as beautiful as roses. Nominalist and Realist.

JUNE 22.

Mrs. R. H. Mitchell
75 yrs 1928

June 23.

The farmer bends to the order of the seasons, the weather, the soils and crops, as the sails of a ship bend to the wind. He represents continuous hard labor, year in, year out, and small gains. He is a slow person, timed to Nature, and not to city watches. He takes the pace of seasons, plants, and chemistry.

FARMING

Soft! let not the offended muse
Toils hard hap with scorn accuse.
Many hamlets sought I then,
Many farms of mountain men:
Sweat and season are their arts,
Their talismans are ploughs and carts;
And well the youngest can command
Honey from the frozen land.

MONADNOCK

June 24.

Nature ever faithful is
To such as trust her faithfulness.
When the forest shall mislead me,
When the night and morning lie,
When sea and land refuse to feed me,
'T will be time enough to die;
Then will yet my mother yield
A pillow in her greenest field,
Nor the June flowers scorn to cover
The clay of their departed lover.

WOODNOTES.

JUNE 23.

Gardner died, 1896

JUNE 24.

June 25.

We have crept out of our close and crowded houses into the night and morning, and we see what majestic beauties daily wrap us in their bosom. How willingly we would escape the barriers which render them comparatively impotent, escape the sophistication and second thought, and suffer nature to entrance us. NATURE.

If I could put my woods in song,
And tell what 's there enjoyed,
All men would to my gardens throng,
And leave the cities void. MY GARDEN.

June 26.

Behind thee leave thy merchandise
Thy churches, and thy charities ;
And leave thy peacock wit behind ;
Enough for thee the primal mind
That flows in streams, that breathes in wind.
Leave all thy pedant lore apart ;
God hid the whole world in thy heart.
Love shuns the sage, the child it crowns,
Gives all to them who all renounce.
WOODNOTES.

June 25.

June 26.

June 27.

The soul is no traveller ; the wise man stays at home, and when his necessities, his duties, on any occasion call him from his house, or into foreign lands, he is at home still, and shall make men sensible by the expression of his countenance, that he goes the missionary of wisdom and virtue, and visits cities and men like a sovereign, and not like an interloper or a valet. SELF-RELIANCE.

He is the rich man who can avail himself of all men's faculties. He is the richest man who knows how to draw a benefit from the labors of the greatest number of men, of men in distant countries and in past times. WEALTH.

June 28.

The Gothic cathedral is a blossoming in stone subdued by the insatiable demand of harmony in man. The mountain of granite blooms into an eternal flower, with the lightness and delicate finish, as well as the aerial proportions and perspective, of vegetable beauty. HISTORY.

> These temples grew as grows the grass ;
> Art might obey, but not surpass.
> The passive Master lent his hand
> To the vast soul that o'er him planned.
>
> THE PROBLEM.

June 27.

June 28.

June 29.

A man is a centre for nature, running out threads of relation through everything, fluid and solid, material and elemental. The earth rolls; every clod and stone comes to the meridian: so every organ, function, acid, crystal, grain of dust, has its relation to the brain. It waits long, but its turn comes. Each plant has its parasite, and each created thing its lover and poet. . . . . But how few materials are yet used by our arts! The mass of creatures and of qualities are still hid and expectant. It would seem as if each waited, like the enchanted princess in fairy tales, for a destined human deliverer. Each must be disenchanted, and walk forth to the day in human shape. Representative Men.

June 30.

The rain comes when the wind calls;
The river knows the way to the sea;
Without a pilot it runs and falls,
Blessing all lands with its charity;
The sea tosses and foams to find
Its way up to the cloud and wind;
The shadow sits close to the flying ball;
The date fails not on the palm-tree tall;
And thou, — go burn thy wormy pages, —
Shalt outsee seers, and outwit sages.

Woodnotes.

June 29.

June 30.

As poured the flood of the ancient sea
Spilling over mountain-chains,
Bending forests as bends the sedge,
Faster flowing o'er the plains, —
A world-wide wave with a foaming edge
That rims the running silver sheet, —
So pours the deluge of the heat
Broad northward o'er the land.
Painting artless paradises,
Drugging herbs with Syrian spices,
Fanning secret fires which glow
In columbine and clover-blow.
Climbing the northern zones,
Where a thousand pallid towns
Lie like cockles by the main,
Or tented armies on a plain.
The million-handed painter pours
Opal hues and purple dye;
Azaleas flush the island floors,
And the tints of heaven reply. MAY-DAY

July.

Behold the Sea,
The opaline, the plentiful and strong,
Yet beautiful as is the rose in June,
Fresh as the trickling rainbow of July;
Sea full of food, the nourisher of kinds,
Purger of earth, and medicine of men;
Creating a sweet climate by my breath,
Washing out harms and griefs from memory,
And, in my mathematic ebb and flow,
Giving a hint of that which changes not.
Rich are the sea-gods: — who gives gifts but they?
They grope the sea for pearls, but more than pearls:
They pluck Force thence, and give it to the wise.
For every wave is wealth to Dædalus,
Wealth to the cunning artist who can work
This matchless strength. Where shall he find, O waves!
A load your Atlas shoulders cannot lift?

Sea-Shore

July 1.

What god is this imperial Heat,
Earth's prime secret, sculpture's seat?
Doth it bear hidden in its heart
Water-line patterns of all art,
Is it Dædalus? is it Love?
Or walks in mask almighty Jove,
And drops from Power's redundant horn
All seeds of beauty to be born?

May-Day.

July 2.

Nature, like a cautious testator, ties up her estate so as not to bestow it all on one generation, but has a forelooking tenderness and equal regard to the next and the next, and the fourth, and the fortieth age.

There lie the inexhaustible magazines. The eternal rocks, as we call them, have held their oxygen or lime undiminished, entire, as it was. No particle of oxygen can rust or wear, but has the same energy as on the first morning. Farming.

No ray is dimmed, no atom worn,
My oldest force is good as new,
And the fresh rose on yonder thorn
Gives back the bending heavens in dew.

Song of Nature.

July 1.

July 2.

July 3.

How the day fits itself to the mind, winds itself round it like a fine drapery, clothing all its fancies. Any holiday communicates to us its color. We wear its cockade and favors in our humor. Remember what boys think in the morning of the Fourth of July, of Thanksgiving or Christmas. The very stars in their courses wink to them of nuts and cakes, bonbons, presents, and fireworks. . . . . Do you not recall that life was then calendared by moments, threw itself into nervous knots or glittering hours, even as now.

WORKS AND DAYS.

July 4.

O tenderly the haughty day
Fills his blue urn with fire;
One morn is in the mighty heaven,
And one in our desire.

The cannon booms from town to town,
Our pulses are not less,
The joy-bells chime their tidings down,
Which children's voices bless.

For He that flung the broad blue fold
O'er-mantling land and sea,
One third part of the sky unrolled
For the banner of the free.

FOURTH OF JULY ODE.

JULY 3.

Mary Prescott's Roger Hatch
Married 1901

JULY 4.

Mrs Hammett.

July 5.

Nature is sanative, refining, elevating. How cunningly she hides every wrinkle of her inconceivable antiquity under roses, and violets, and morning dew! Every inch of the mountains is scarred by unimaginable convulsions, yet the new day is purple with the bloom of youth and love. Look out into the July night, and see the broad belt of silver flame which flashes up the half of heaven, fresh and delicate as the bonfires of the meadow-flies. Yet the powers of numbers cannot compute its enormous age — lasting as space and time — embosomed in time and space.

Progress of Culture.

July 6.

I hide in the solar glory,
I am dumb in the pealing song,
I rest on the pitch of the torrent,
In slumber I am strong.

No numbers have counted my tallies,
No tribes my house can fill,
I sit by the shining Fount of Life,
And pour the deluge still.

Song of Nature.

July 5.

July 6.

July 7.

My house stands in low land, with limited outlook, and on the skirt of the village. But I go with my friend to the shore of our little river, and with one stroke of the paddle I leave the village politics and personalities, yes, and the world of villages and personalities behind, and pass into a delicate realm of sunset and moonlight, too bright almost for spotted man to enter without novitiate and probation. We penetrate bodily this incredible beauty: we dip our hands in this painted element: our eyes are bathed in these lights and forms.

NATURE.

July 8.

Thou canst not wave thy staff in air,
Or dip thy paddle in the lake,
But it carves the bow of beauty there,
And the ripples in rhymes the oar forsake.
The wood is wiser far than thou;
The wood and wave each other know.
Not unrelated, unaffied,
But to each thought and thing allied,
Is perfect Nature's every part,
Rooted in the mighty Heart.

WOODNOTES.

July 7.

July 8.

July 9.

From day to day, the capital facts of human life are hidden from our eyes. Suddenly the mist rolls up, and reveals them, and we think how much good time is gone, that might have been saved, had any hint of these things been shown. A sudden rise in the road shows us the system of mountains, and all the summits, which have been just as near us all the year, but quite out of mind. Illusions

The depth of the notes which we accidentally sound on the strings of nature is out of all proportion to our taught and ascertained faculty, and might teach us what strangers and novices we are, vagabond in this universe of pure power, to which we have only the smallest key. Inspiration.

July 10.

Ever the words of the gods resound;
But the porches of man's ear
Seldom in this low life's round
Are unsealed, that he may hear.

Wandering voices in the air,
And murmurs in the wold,
Speak what I cannot declare,
Yet cannot all withhold. My Garden.

July 9.

July 10.

July 11.

A true man belongs to no other time or place, but is the centre of things. Ordinarily, everybody in society reminds us of somewhat else, or of some other person. Character, reality, reminds you of nothing else ; it takes place of the whole creation. The man must be so much, that he must make all circumstances indifferent. Every true man is a cause, a country, and an age ; . . . . and posterity seem to follow his steps as a train of clients. A man Cæsar is born, and for ages after we have a Roman Empire. SELF-RELIANCE.

July 12.

Thoreau's power of observation seemed to indicate additional senses. He saw as with microscope, heard as with ear-trumpet ; and his memory was a photographic register of all he saw and heard.

There is a flower called by the Swiss *Edelweisse*, which signifies *Noble Purity*. Thoreau seemed to me living in the hope to gather this plant, which belonged to him of right. The country knows not yet, or in the least part, how great a son it has lost. It seems an injury that he should leave in the midst his broken task, which none else can finish — a kind of indignity to so noble a soul that it should depart out of Nature before yet he has been really shown to his peers for what he is. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

July 11.

Gertrude Graves

July 12.

Julius Cæsar B. C. 100; H. D. Thoreau, 1817.

July 13.

Every natural feature, — sea, sky, rainbow, flowers, musical tone, — has in it somewhat which is not private, but universal, speaks of that central benefit which is the soul of Nature, and thereby is beautiful. BEAUTY.

Erect as a sunbeam,
Upspringeth the palm ;
The elephant browses,
Undaunted and calm ;
In beautiful motion
The thrush plies his wings ;
Kind leaves of his covert
Your silence he sings.

THE SPHINX.

July 14.

He who knows the most, he who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man. Only as far as the masters of the world have called in nature to their aid, can they reach the height of magnificence.

Every moment instructs, and every object : for wisdom is infused into every form. It has been poured into us as blood ; it convulsed us as pain ; it slid into us as pleasure ; it enveloped us in dull, melancholy days, or in days of cheerful labor ; we did not guess its essence, until after a long time.

NATURE.

July 14.

Edwin Lane Lane Greene Jr.
1910

JULY 15.

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. . . . . Speak what you think now in hard words, and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said to-day. — "Ah, so you shall be sure to be misunderstood." — Is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood. SELF-RELIANCE.

JULY 16.

There is no chance in results. With adults as with children, one class enter cordially into the game, and whirl with the whirling world; the others have cold hands and remain bystanders; or are only dragged in by the humor and vivacity of those who can carry a dead weight.

All successful men have agreed in one thing, — they were *causationists*. They believed that things went not by luck, but by law. . . . . Belief in compensation, or, that nothing is got for nothing, — characterizes all valuable minds. POWER.

July 15.

July 16.

July 17.

The influence of fine scenery, the presence of mountains, appeases our irritations and elevates our friendships. Even a high dome, and the expansive interior of a cathedral, have a sensible effect on manners. I have heard that stiff people lose something of their awkwardness under high ceilings, and in spacious halls. I think sculpture and painting have an effect to teach us manners, and abolish hurry. CULTURE.

July 18.

Aught unsavory or unclean
Hath my insect never seen;
But violets and bilberry bells,
Maple-sap, and daffodils,
Grass with green flag half-mast high,
Succory to match the sky,
Columbine with horn of honey,
Scented fern, and agrimony,
Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue,
And brier-roses, dwelt among;
All beside was unknown waste,
All was picture as he passed.

THE HUMBLEBEE.

July 17.

July 18.

July 19.

The men in cities who are the centres of energy, the driving-wheels of trade, politics, or practical arts, and the women of beauty and genius, are the children or grandchildren of farmers, and are spending the energies which their fathers' hardy, silent life accumulated in frosty furrows, in poverty, necessity, and darkness. FARMING.

The lord is the peasant that was,
The peasant the lord that shall be ;
The lord is hay, the peasant grass,
One dry, and one the living tree.
Who liveth by the ragged pine
Foundeth a heroic line. WOODNOTES.

July 20.

We a pine-grove did prefer
To a marble theatre,
Could with gods on mallows dine,
Nor cared for spices or for wine.
Wreaths of mist and rainbow spanned,
Arch on arch, the grimmest land ;
Whistle of a woodland bird
Made the pulses dance,
Note of horn in valleys heard
Filled the region with romance.
MAY-DAY.

July 19.

July 20.

July 21.

'T is pitiful the things by which we are rich or poor, — a matter of coins, coats, and carpets, a little more or less stone, or wood, or paint, the fashion of a cloak or hat; like the luck of naked Indians, of whom one is proud in the possession of a glass bead or a red feather, and the rest miserable in the want of it. Works and Days.

I do not travel to find comfortable, rich, and hospitable people, or clear sky, or ingots that cost too much. But if there were any magnet that would point to the countries and houses where are the persons who are intrinsically rich and powerful, I would sell all, and buy it, and put myself on the road to-day. Representative Men.

July 22.

Hot midsummer's petted crone,
Sweet to me thy drowsy tone
Tells of countless sunny hours,
Long days, and solid banks of flowers;
Of gulfs of sweetness without bound
In Indian wildernesses found;
Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,
Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure.

The Humblebee.

July 21.

July 22.

July 23.

My book should smell of pines and resound with the hum of insects. The swallow over my window should interweave that thread or straw he carries in his bill into my web also. Self-Reliance.

Here Nature shall condense her powers,
Her music, and her meteors,
And lifting man to the blue deep
Where stars their perfect courses keep,
Like wise preceptor, lure his eye
To sound the science of the sky,
And carry learning to its height
Of untried power and sane delight.

Monadnock.

July 24.

It is easy to sugar to be sweet, and to nitre to be salt. We take a great deal of pains to waylay and entrap that which of itself will fall into our hands.

Representative Men.

Nor scour the seas, nor sift mankind,
A poet or a friend to find:
Behold, he watches at the door!
Behold his shadow on the floor!

. . . . . .

Seek not beyond thy cottage wall
Redeemers that can yield thee all.

Saadi.

July 23.

My own -
Grace and Richard married

July 24.

Louisa Britton Graves

July 25.

The reason why we feel one man's presence, and do not feel another's, is as simple as gravity. Truth is the summit of being; justice is the application of it to affairs. And individual natures stand in a scale, according to the purity of this element in them. The will of the pure runs down from them into other natures, as water runs down from a higher into a lower vessel. This natural force is no more to be withstood than any other natural force.

CHARACTER.

July 26.

Yet shine forever virgin minds,
Loved by stars and purest winds,
Which, o'er passion throned sedate,
Have not hazarded their state;
Disconcert the searching spy,
Rendering to a curious eye
The durance of a granite ledge
To those who gaze from the sea's edge.
It is there for benefit;
It is there for purging light;
There for purifying storms;
And its depths reflect all forms;
It cannot parley with the mean, —
Pure by impure is not seen.

ASTRÆA.

JULY 25.

Eleanor Hill Kinstler

JULY 26.

Beulah Norton

July 27.

Let a man learn that everything in nature, even motes and feathers, go by law and not by luck, and that what he sows he reaps. By diligence and self-command, let him put the bread he eats at his own disposal, that he may not stand in bitter and false relations to other men; for the best good of wealth is freedom. Let him practice the minor virtues. How much of human life is lost in waiting! let him not make his fellow-creatures wait. How many words and promises are promises of conversation! let his be words of fate. PRUDENCE.

Theme no poet gladly sung,
Fair to old and foul to young,
Scorn not thou the love of parts,
And the articles of arts.
Grandeur of the perfect sphere
Thanks the atoms that cohere.

PRUDENCE.

July 28.

To the poet, to the philosopher, to the saint, all things are friendly and sacred, all events profitable, all days holy, all men divine. For the eye is fastened on the life, and slights the circumstance. Every chemical substance, every plant, every animal in its growth, teaches the unity of cause, the variety of appearance. HISTORY.

July 27.

July 28.

July 29.

There is a relation between the hours of our life and the centuries of time. As the air I breathe is drawn from the great repositories of nature, as the light on my book is yielded by a star a hundred millions of miles distant, as the poise of my body depends on the equilibrium of centrifugal and centripetal forces, so the hours should be instructed by the ages, and the ages explained by the hours.

History.

July 30.

The Saxons are the merchants of the world; now, for a thousand years, the leading race, and by nothing more than their quality of personal independence, and, in its special modification, pecuniary independence. No reliance for bread and games on the government, no clanship, no patriarchal style of living by the revenues of a chief, no marrying-on, — no system of clientship suits them; but every man must pay his scot.

Wealth.

As the overhanging trees
Fill the lake with images, —
As garment draws the garment's hem,
Men their fortunes bring with them.
By right or wrong,
Lands and goods go to the strong.

The Celestial Love.

July 29.

July 30.

And such I knew, a forest seer,
A minstrel of the natural year,
Foreteller of the vernal ides,
Wise harbinger of spheres and tides,
A lover true, who knew by heart
Each joy the mountain dales impart;
It seemed that Nature could not raise
A plant in any secret place, ...
But he would come in the very hour
It opened in its virgin bower,
As if a sunbeam showed the place,
And tell its long-descended race.

. . . . . .

All her shows did Nature yield,
To please and win this pilgrim wise.
He saw the partridge drum in the woods;
He heard the woodcock's evening hymn;
He found the tawny thrushes' broods;
And the shy hawk did wait for him;
What others did at distance hear,
And guessed within the thicket's gloom,
Was showed to this philosopher,
And at his bidding seemed to come.

WOODNOTES.

I touch this flower of silken leaf,
Which once our childhood knew;
Its soft leaves wound me with a grief
Whose balsam never grew.

Hearken to yon pine-warbler
Singing aloft in the tree!
Hearest thou, O traveller,
What he singeth to me?

Not unless God made sharp thine ear
With sorrow such as mine,
Out of that delicate lay couldst thou
Its heavy tale divine.

"Go, lonely man," it saith;
"They loved thee from their birth;
Their hands were pure, and pure their faith, —
There are no such hearts on earth.

"You cannot unlock your heart,
The key is gone with them;
The silent organ loudest chants
The master's requiem."

DIRGE.

August.

TWO RIVERS.

Thy summer voice, Musketaquit,
Repeats the music of the rain;
But sweeter rivers pulsing flit
Through thee, as thou through Concord Plain.

Thou in thy narrow banks art pent:
The stream I love unbounded goes
Through flood and sea and firmament;
Through light, through life, it forward flows.

I see the inundation sweet,
I hear the spending of the stream
Through years, through men, through nature fleet,
Through love and thought, through power and dream.

Musketaquit, a goblin strong,
Of shard and flint makes jewels gay;
They lose their grief who hear his song,
And where he winds is the day of day.

So forth and brighter fares my stream, —
Who drink it shall not thirst again;
No darkness stains its equal gleam,
And ages drop in it like rain.

August 1.

I heard or seemed to hear the chiding sea
Say, Pilgrim, why so late and slow to come?
Am I not always here, thy summer home?
Is not my voice thy music, morn and eve?
My breath thy healthful climate in the heats,
My touch thy antidote, my bay thy bath?
Was ever building like my terraces?
Was ever couch magnificent as mine?

SEA-SHORE.

August 2.

There is in woods and waters a certain enticement and flattery, together with a failure to yield a present satisfaction. This disappointment is felt in every landscape. I have seen the softness and beauty of the summer-clouds floating feathery overhead, enjoying, as it seemed, their height and privilege of motion, whilst yet they appeared not so much the drapery of this place and hour, as forelooking to some pavilions and gardens of festivity beyond. NATURE.

Thee gliding through the sea of form,
Like the lightning through the storm,
Somewhat not to be possessed,
Somewhat not to be caressed,
No feet so fleet could ever find,
No perfect form could ever bind.

ODE TO BEAUTY.

August 1.

August 2.

August 3.

The tempered light of the woods is like a perpetual morning, and is stimulating and heroic. The anciently reported spells of these places creep on us. The stems of pines, hemlocks, and oaks, almost gleam like iron on the excited eye. The incommunicable trees begin to persuade us to live with them, and quit our life of solemn trifles. Here no history, or church, or state, is interpolated on the divine sky and the immortal year.

NATURE.

Who leaves the pine-tree, leaves his friend,
Unnerves his strength, invites his end.

WOODNOTES.

August 4.

The uses of the woods are many, and some of them for the scholar high and peremptory. . . . . He must leave the house, the streets, and the club, and go to wooded uplands, to the clearing and the brook. Well for him if he can say with the old minstrel, "I know where to find a new song."

RESOURCES.

Hither we bring
Our insect miseries to thy rocks;
And the whole flight, with folded wing,
Vanish, and end their murmuring, —
Vanish beside these dedicated blocks,
Which who can tell what mason laid?

MONADNOCK.

August 3.

August 4.

Dear Mother died at
Nahant 1908

August 5.

There is no finer ear than Tennyson's, nor more command of the keys of language. Color, like the dawn, flows over the horizon from his pencil, in waves so rich that we do not miss the central form. Through all his refinements, too, he has reached the public, — a certificate of good sense and general power, since he who aspires to be the English poet must be as large as London, not in the same kind as London, but in his own kind.

English Traits.

Tennyson has incomparable felicity in all poetic forms, surpassing in melody also. . . . . The variety of his poems discloses the wealth and the health of his mind. Nay, some of his words are poems. Parnassus.

August 6.

Poetry teaches the enormous force of a few words, and, in proportion to the inspiration, checks loquacity. It requires that splendor of expression which carries with it the proof of great thoughts. Great thoughts insure musical expressions. Every word should be the right word. The poets are they who see that spiritual is greater than any material force, that thoughts rule the world. The great poets are judged by the frame of mind they induce; and to them, of all men, the severest criticism is due. Parnassus.

August 5.

Alfred Tennyson, 1809.

August 6.

August 7.

Perhaps you can recall a delight, which spoke to the eye, when you have stood by a lake in the woods, in summer, and saw where little flaws of wind whip spots or patches of still water into fleets of ripples, so sudden, so slight, so spiritual, that it was more like the rippling of the Aurora Borealis, at night, than any spectacle of day. Inspiration

Song wakes in my pinnacles
When the wind swells.
Soundeth the prophetic wind,
The shadows shake on the rock behind,
And the countless leaves of the pine are strings
Tuned to the lay the wood-god sings.

Woodnotes.

August 8.

Scoop up a little water in the hollow of your palm, take up a handful of shore sand; well, these are the elements. What is the beach but acres of sand? what is the ocean but cubic miles of water? a little more or less signifies nothing. Success.

For there 's no rood has not a star above it;
The cordial quality of pear or plum
Ascends as gladly in a single tree
As in broad orchards resonant with bees;
And every atom poises for itself,
And for the whole. Muskataquid.

August 7.

August 8.

August 9.

For what is it that we seek, in so many visits and hospitalities? Is it your draperies, pictures, and decorations? Or, do we not insatiably ask, Was a man in the house? I may easily go into a great household where there is much substance, excellent provision for comfort, luxury, and taste, and yet not encounter there any Amphitryon, who shall subordinate these appendages.

No house, though it were the Tuileries, or the Escurial, is good for anything without a master. And yet we are not often gratified by this hospitality. Everybody we know surrounds himself with a fine house, fine books, conservatory, gardens, equipages, and all manner of toys, as screens to interpose between himself and his guest.

Manners.

August 10.

Lie on the warm rock-ledges, and there learn
A little hut suffices like a town.
I make your sculptured architecture vain,
Vain beside mine. I drive my wedges home,
And carve the coastwise mountain into caves.
Lo! here is Rome, and Nineveh, and Thebes,
Karnak, and Pyramid, and Giant's Stairs,
Half piled or prostrate; and my newest slab
Older than all thy race.

Sea-Shore.

August 9.

August 10.

August 11.

All men are commanded by the saint. The Koran makes a distinct class of those who are by nature good, and whose goodness has an influence on others, and pronounces this class to be the aim of creation: the other classes are admitted to the feast of being, only as following in the train of this. And the Persian poet exclaims to a soul of this kind: —

"Go boldly forth, and feast on being's banquet;
Thou art the called, — the rest admitted with thee."

Representative Men.

August 12.

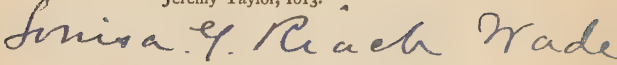
I know what say the fathers wise, —
The Book itself before me lies,
Old Chrysostom, best Augustine,
And he who blent both in his line,
The younger *Golden Lips* or mines,
Taylor, the Shakespeare of divines.
His words are music in my ear,
I see his cowled portrait dear;
And yet, for all his faith could see,
I would not the good bishop be.

Why should the vest on him allure,
Which I could not on me endure.

The Problem.

August 12.

Jeremy Taylor, 1613.



August 13.

Nature paints the best part of the picture; carves the best part of the statue; builds the best part of the house; and speaks the best part of the oration.

ART.

All power is of one kind, a sharing of the nature of the world. The mind that is parallel with the laws of nature will be in the current of events, and strong with their strength. One man is made of the same stuff of which events are made; is in sympathy with the course of things; can predict it. Whatever befalls, befalls him first, so that he is equal to whatever shall happen.

POWER.

August 14.

The delicate shells lay on the shore;
The bubbles of the latest wave
Fresh pearls to their enamel gave,
And the bellowing of the savage sea
Greeted their safe escape to me.
I wiped away the weeds and foam —
I fetched my sea-born treasures home;
But the poor, unsightly, noisome things
Had left their beauty on the shore,
With the sun, and the sand, and the wild uproar.

EACH AND ALL.

August 13.

August 14.

August 15.

We cannot, in the universal imbecility, indecision, and indolence of men, sufficiently congratulate ourselves on this strong and ready actor, who took occasion by the beard, and showed us how much may be accomplished by the mere force of such virtues as all men possess in less degrees; namely, by punctuality, by personal attention, by courage, and thoroughness. . . . . His power does not consist in any wild or extravagant force; in any enthusiasm, like Mahomet's; or singular power of persuasion; but in the exercise of common sense on each emergency, instead of abiding by rules and customs. The lesson he teaches is that which vigor always teaches, — that there is always room for it. To what heaps of cowardly doubts is not that man's life an answer.

Representative Men.

August 16.

Wise men read very sharply all your private history in your look and gait and behavior. The whole economy of nature is bent on expression. The tell-tale body is all tongues. Men are like Geneva watches with crystal faces which expose the whole movement. They carry the liquor of life flowing up and down in these beautiful bottles, and announcing to the curious how it is with them.

Behavior.

August 15.

Napoleon Bonaparte, 1769.

August 16.

August 17.

The passion rebuilds the world for the youth. It makes all things alive and significant. Nature grows conscious. Every bird on the boughs of the tree sings now to his heart and soul. The notes are almost articulate. The clouds have faces as he looks on them. The trees of the forest, the waving grass, and the peeping flowers, have grown intelligent; and he almost fears to trust them with the secret which they seem to invite. Yet nature soothes and sympathizes. In the green solitude he finds a dearer home than with men. LOVE.

He affects the wood and wild,
Like a flower-hunting child;
Busies himself in summer waves,
In trees, in beasts, in mines, in caves.

THE INITIAL LOVE

August 18.

The solid, solid universe
Is pervious to Love;
With bandaged eyes he never errs,
Around, below, above.
His blinding light
He flingeth white
On God's and Satan's brood,
And reconciles
By mystic wiles
The evil and the good. CUPIDO.

August 17.

August 18.

August 19.

Our knowledge is the amassed thought and experience of innumerable minds : our language, our science, our religion, our opinions, our fancies we inherited. Our country, customs, laws, our ambitions, and our notions of fit and fair — all these we never made ; we found them ready-made ; we but quote them.

In literature quotation is good only when the writer whom I follow goes my way, and, being better mounted than I, gives me a cast, as we say ; but if I like the gay equipage so well as to go out of my road, I had better have gone afoot.

Quotation and Originality.

August 20.

Herrick is the lyric poet, ostentatiously choosing petty subjects, petty names for each piece, and disposing of his theme in a few lines, or in a couplet ; is never dull, and is the master of miniature painting. On graver themes, in his " Sacred Numbers," he is equally successful. Parnassus.

Perhaps this dainty style of poetry is not producible to-day, any more than a right Gothic cathedral. It belonged to a time and taste which is not in the world. Poetry and Imagination.

August 20.

Robert Herrick, 1591.

August 21.

At the gates of the forest, the surprised man of the world is forced to leave his city estimates of great and small, wise and foolish. The knapsack of custom falls off his back with the first step he makes into these precincts. NATURE.

When the shadow fell on the lake,
The whirlwind in ripples wrote
Air-bells of fortune that shine and break,
And omens above thought.

But the meanings cleave to the lake,
Cannot be carried in book or urn;
Go thy ways now, come later back,
On waves and hedges still they burn.

MY GARDEN

August 22.

It costs a rare combination of clouds and lights to overcome the common and mean. What is it we look for in the landscape, in sunsets and sunrises, in the sea and the firmament? What but a compensation for the cramp and pettiness of human performances? SUCCESS.

A man is a beggar who only lives to the useful, and, however he may serve as a pin or rivet in the social machine, cannot be said to have arrived at self-possession. I suffer, every day, from the want of perception of beauty in people. CULTURE.

August 21.

August 22.

August 23.

These enchantments are medicinal, they sober and heal us. These are plain pleasures, kindly and native to us. We come to our own, and make friends with matter, which the ambitious chatter of the schools would persuade us to despise.

NATURE.

In plains that room for shadows make
Of skirting hills to lie,
Bound in by streams which give and take
Their colors from the sky;

Or on the mountain-crest sublime,
Or down the oaken glade,
O what have I to do with time?
For this the day was made.

WALDEINSAMKEIT.

August 24.

Every day brings a ship,
Every ship brings a word;
Well for those who have no fear,
Looking seaward well assured
That the word the vessel brings
Is the word they wish to hear.

LETTERS.

August 23.

August 24.

August 25.

As language is in the alphabet, so is entire Nature — the play of all its laws — in one atom. The good wit finds the law from a single observation — the law, and its limitations, and its correspondences — as the farmer finds his cattle by a footprint. "State the sun, and you state the planets, and conversely." Progress of Culture.

All things
Are of one pattern made; bird, beast, and flower,
Song, picture, form, space, thought, and character
Deceive us, seeming to be many things,
And are but one. Xenophanes.

August 26.

Our first mistake is the belief that the circumstance gives the joy which we give to the circumstance. Life is an ecstasy. Life is sweet as nitrous oxide; and the fisherman dripping all day over a cold pond, the switchman at the railway intersection, the farmer in the field, the negro in the rice-swamp, the fop in the street, the hunter in the woods, the barrister with the jury, the belle at the ball, all ascribe a certain pleasure to their employment, which they themselves give it. Illusions.

August 25.

August 26.

August 27.

I describe Bonaparte as a representative of the popular external life and aims of the nineteenth century. Its other half, its poet, is Goethe, a man quite domesticated in the century, breathing its air, enjoying its fruits, impossible at any earlier time, and taking away, by his colossal parts, the reproach of weakness, which, but for him, would lie on the intellectual works of the period.

Representative Men.

August 28.

I dare not say that Goethe ascended to the highest grounds from which genius has spoken. He has not worshipped the highest unity; he is incapable of a self-surrender to the moral sentiment. There are nobler strains in poetry than any he has sounded.

He is the type of culture, the amateur of all arts, and sciences, and events; artistic, but not artist; spiritual, but not spiritualist. There is nothing he had not right to know: there is no weapon in the armory of universal genius he did not take into his hand, but with peremptory heed that he should not be for a moment prejudiced by his instruments. . . . . From him nothing was hid, nothing withholden. The lurking demons sat to him, and the saint who saw the demons; and the metaphysical elements took form.

Representative Men.

August 27.

August 28.

Goethe, 1749.

August 29.

The basis of good manners is self-reliance. Necessity is the law of all who are not self-possessed. Those who are not self-possessed obtrude, and pain us. Some men appear to feel that they belong to a Pariah caste. They fear to offend, they bend and apologize, and walk through life with a timid step. As we sometimes dream that we are in a well-dressed company without any coat, so Godfrey acts ever as if he suffered from some mortifying circumstance. The hero should find himself at home, wherever he is; should impart comfort by his own security and good nature to all beholders.

Behavior.

August 30.

'T is a Dutch proverb, that "paint costs nothing," such are its preserving qualities in damp climates. Well, sunshine costs less, yet is finer pigment. And so of cheerfulness, or a good temper, the more it is spent, the more of it remains. The latent heat of an ounce of wood or stone is inexhaustible. You may rub the same chip of pine to the point of kindling, a hundred times; and the power of happiness of any soul is not to be computed or drained. It is observed that a depression of spirits develops the germs of a plague in individuals and nations.

Considerations by the Way.

August 29.

August 30.

Blooms the laurel which belongs
To the valiant chief who fights ;
I see the wreath, I hear the songs
Lauding the Eternal Rights,
Victors over daily wrongs :
Awful victors, they misguide
Whom they will destroy,
And their coming triumph hide
In our downfall, or our joy :
They reach no term, they never sleep,
In equal strength through space abide ;
Though, feigning dwarfs, they crouch and creep,
The strong they slay, the swift outstride :
Fate's grass grows rank in valley clods,
And rankly on the castled steep, —
Speak it firmly, these are gods,
All are ghosts beside.

VOLUNTARIES.

FRIENDSHIP.

A ruddy drop of manly blood
The surging sea outweighs,
The world uncertain comes and goes,
The lover rooted stays.
I fancied he was fled, —
And, after many a year,
Glowed unexhausted kindliness,
Like daily sunrise there.
My careful heart was free again,
O friend, my bosom said,
Through thee alone the sky is arched,
Through thee the rose is red;
All things through thee take nobler form,
And look beyond the earth,
The mill-round of our fate appears
A sun-path in thy worth.
Me too thy nobleness has taught
To master my despair;
The fountains of my hidden life
Are through thy friendship fair.

September.

THE APOLOGY.

THINK me not unkind and rude
That I walk alone in grove and glen;
I go to the god of the wood
To fetch his word to men.

Tax not my sloth that I
Fold my arms beside the brook;
Each cloud that floated in the sky
Writes a letter in my book.

Chide me not, laborious band,
For the idle flowers I brought;
Every aster in my hand
Goes home loaded with a thought.

There was never mystery
But 't is figured in the flowers;
Was never secret history
But birds tell it in the bowers.

One harvest from thy field
Homeward brought the oxen strong;
A second crop thine acres yield,
Which I gather in a song.

September 1.

Chiefly the sea-shore has been the point of departure to knowledge, as to commerce. The most advanced nations are always those who navigate the most.

Civilization.

My paths lead out
The exodus of nations: I disperse
Men to all shores that front the hoary main.

I too have arts and sorceries;
Illusion dwells forever with the wave.
I know what spells are laid. Leave me to deal
With credulous and imaginative man;
For, though he scoop my water in his palm,
A few rods off he deems it gems and clouds.
Planting strange fruits and sunshine on the shore,
I make some coast alluring, some lone isle,
To distant men, who must go there, or die.

Sea-Shore.

September 2.

The test of the poet is the power to take the passing day, with its news, its cares, its fears, as he shares them, and hold it up to a divine reason, till he sees it to have a purpose and beauty, and to be related to astronomy and history, and the eternal order of the world. Then the dry twig blossoms in his hand. He is calmed and elevated.

Poetry and Imagination.

September 1.

September 2.

September 3.

Music and rhyme are among the earliest pleasures of the child, and, in the history of literature, poetry precedes prose. Every one may see, as he rides on the highway through an uninteresting landscape, how a little water instantly relieves the monotony: no matter what objects are near it — a gray rock, a grass-patch, an alder-bush, or a stake — they become beautiful by being reflected. It is rhyme to the eye, and explains the charm of rhyme to the ear. Shadows please us as still finer rhymes.

Poetry and Imagination.

September 4.

Pindar, Dante, Shakespeare, whilst they have the just and open soul, have also the eye to see the dimmest star, the serratures of every leaf, the test objects of the microscope, and then the tongue to utter the same things in words that engrave them on the ears of all mankind. Parnassus.

I hear the lofty pæans
Of the masters of the shell,
Who heard the starry music
And recount the numbers well;
Olympian bards who sung
Divine Ideas below,
Which always find us young,
And always keep us so.

Ode to Beauty.

September 3.

September 4.

Pindar, 520 B. C.

September 5.

The charm of the best courages is that they are inventions, inspirations, flashes of genius. The hero could not have done the feat at another hour, in a lower mood. The best act of the marvellous genius of Greece was its first act; not in the statue, or the Parthenon, but in the instinct which, at Thermopylæ, held Asia at bay, kept Asia out of Europe, — Asia with its antiquities and organic slavery, — from corrupting the hope and new morning of the West. The statue, the architecture, were the later and inferior creation of the same genius.

Courage.

September 6.

Literary history and all history is a record of the power of minorities. Every book is written with a constant secret reference to the few intelligent persons whom the writer believes to exist in the million. The artist has always the masters in his eye, though he affect to flout them. . . . . In politics mark the importance of minorities of one, as of Phocion, Cato, Lafayette, Arago. The importance of the one person who has the truth over nations who have it not, is because power obeys reality, and not appearance; according to quality, and not quantity.

Progress of Culture.

Pole-star of light in Europe's night,
That never faltered from the right.

Boston.

September 5.

September 6.

Lafayette, 1757.

September 7.

In modern Europe, the Middle Ages were called the Dark Ages. Who dares to call them so now? They are seen to be the feet on which we walk, the eyes with which we see. 'T is one of our triumphs to have reinstated them. Their Dante and Alfred and Wickliffe and Abelard and Bacon; their Magna Charta, decimal numbers, mariner's compass, gunpowder, glass, paper, and clocks; chemistry, algebra, astronomy; their Gothic architecture, their painting — are the delight and tuition of ours.

Progress of Culture

September 8.

All the argument and all the wisdom is not in the encyclopædia, or the treatise on metaphysics, or the Body of Divinity, but in the sonnet or the play. In my daily work I incline to repeat my old steps, and do not believe in remedial force, in the power of change and reform. But some Petrarch or Ariosto, filled with the new wine of his imagination, writes me an ode or a brisk romance, full of daring thought and action. He smites and arouses me with his shrill tones, breaks up my whole chain of habits, and I open my eye on my own possibilities. He claps wings to the sides of all the solid old lumber of the world, and I am capable once more of choosing a straight path in theory and practice.

Circles.

September 7.

September 8.

Ariosto, 1474.

September 9.

With most men, scarce a link of memory holds yesterday and to-day together. Their house and trade and families serve them as ropes to give a coarse continuity. But they have forgotten the thoughts of yesterday; they say to-day what occurs to them, and something else to-morrow. This insecurity of possession, this quick ebb of power — as if life were a thunder-storm wherein you can see by a flash the horizon, and then cannot see your hand — tantalizes us. We cannot make the inspiration consecutive. INSPIRATION.

September 10.

Dream delivers us to dream, and there is no end to illusion. Life is a train of moods like a string of beads, and, as we pass through them, they prove to be many-colored lenses which paint the world their own hue, and each shows only what lies in its focus.

Life is a series of surprises, and would not be worth taking or keeping, if it were not. God delights to isolate us every day, and hide from us the past and the future. We would look about us, but with grand politeness he draws down before us an impenetrable screen of purest sky, and another behind us of purest sky. EXPERIENCE.

September 9.

September 10.

September 11.

In chosen men and women, I find somewhat in form, speech, and manners, which is not of their person and family, but of a humane, catholic, and spiritual character, and we love them as the sky. They have a largeness of suggestion, and their face and manners carry a certain grandeur, like time and justice.

There are faces so fluid with expression, so flushed and rippled by the play of thought, that we can hardly find what the mere features really are. When the delicious beauty of lineaments loses its power, it is because a more delicious beauty has appeared ; that an interior and durable form has been disclosed. Beauty.

September 12.

All that 's good and great with thee
Works in close conspiracy;
Thou hast bribed the dark and lonely
To report thy features only,
And the cold and purple morning
Itself with thoughts of thee adorning ;
The leafy dell, the city mart,
Equal trophies of thine art;
E'en the flowing azure air
Thou hast touched for my despair.

Ode to Beauty.

SEPTEMBER 12.

Grace Hasseltine Kimball

September 13.

Magic, and all that is ascribed to it, is a deep presentiment of the powers of science. The shoes of swiftness, the sword of sharpness, the power of subduing the elements, of using the secret virtues of minerals, of understanding the voices of birds, are the obscure efforts of the mind in a right direction. History.

These road-makers on every hand enrich us. We must extend the area of life, and multiply our relations. We are as much gainers by finding a new property in the old earth, as by acquiring a new planet. Representative Men.

September 14.

All is waste and worthless, till
Arrives the wise selecting will,
And, out of slime and chaos, Wit
Draws the threads of fair and fit.
Then temples rose, and towns, and marts,
The shop of toil, the hall of arts;
Then flew the sail across the seas
To feed the North from tropic trees;
The storm-wind wove, the torrent span,
Where they were bid the rivers ran;
New slaves fulfilled the poet's dream,
Galvanic wire, strong-shouldered steam.

Wealth.

September 13.

September 14.

September 15.

The farmer stands well on the world, — as Adam did, as an Indian does, as Homer's heroes, Agamemnon or Achilles, do. He is a person whom a poet of any clime — Milton, Firdusi, or Cervantes — would appreciate as being really a piece of the old Nature, comparable to sun and moon, rainbow and flood; because he is, as all natural persons are, representative of Nature as much as these.

Farming.

To these men,
The landscape is an armory of powers,
Which, one by one, they know to draw and use.
They harness beast, bird, insect, to their work;
They prove the virtues of each bed of rock,
And, like the chemist mid his loaded jars,
Draw from each stratum its adapted use
To drug their crops or weapon their arts withal.

Musketaquid.

September 16.

The musing peasant lowly great
Beside the forest water sate;
The rope-like pine-roots crosswise grown
Composed the network of his throne. . . . .
He was the heart of all the scene;
On him the sun looked more serene;
To hill and cloud his face was known, —
It seemed the likeness of their own.

Woodnotes.

SEPTEMBER 15.

Father died 1905

SEPTEMBER 16.

The men are ripe of Saxon kind
To build an equal state, —
To take the statute from the mind,
And make of duty fate.

FOURTH OF JULY ODE.

"We greet you well, you Saxon men,
Up with your towns and stay!"
The world was made for honest trade, —
To plant and eat be none afraid.
"For you," they said, "no barriers be,
For you no sluggard rest;
Each street leads downward to the sea,
Or landward to the West." BOSTON.

SEPTEMBER 18.

Dr. Johnson was a man of no profound mind, — full of English limitations; . . . . yet having a large heart, mother-wit, and good sense, ... his conversation, as reported by Boswell, has a lasting charm. Conversation is the vent of character as well as of thought; and Dr. Johnson impresses his company, not only by the point of the remark, but also, when the point fails, because *he* makes it. His obvious religion or superstition, his deep wish that they should think so or so, weighs with them, — so rare is depth of feeling, or a constitutional value for a thought or opinion, among the light-minded men and women who make up society.

CLUBS.

SEPTEMBER 17.

Settlement of Boston, 1630.

Allen Rogers Benner 2nd
My little godson —
1911 —

SEPTEMBER 18.

Samuel Johnson, 1709.

September 19.

Speak as you think, be what you are, pay your debts of all kinds. I prefer to be owned as sound and solvent, and my word as good as my bond, and to be what cannot be skipped, or dissipated, or undermined, to all the *éclat* in the universe.

Illusions

It is the part of prudence to face every claimant, and pay every just demand on your time, your talents, or your heart. Always pay; for, first or last, you must pay your entire debt. Persons and events may stand for a time between you and justice, but it is only a postponement. You must pay at last your own debt. Compensation.

September 20.

When classes are exasperated against each other, the peace of the world is always kept by striking a new note. Instantly the units part, and form in a new order, and those who were opposed are now side by side. Progress of Culture.

So by remote Superior Lake,
And by resounding Mackinac,
When northern storms the forest shake,
And billows on the long beach break,
The artful Air will separate
Note by note all sounds that grate,
Smothering in her ample breast
All but godlike words. May-Day

SEPTEMBER 20.

"Aunty" Palmer
(Louisa Folsom Baker)
1826-1913

September 21.

To be rich is to have a ticket of admission to the master-works and chief men of each race. It is to have the sea, by voyaging; to visit the mountains, Niagara, the Nile, the desert, Rome, Paris, Constantinople; to see galleries, libraries, arsenals, manufactories. . . . . "The rich man," says Saadi, "is everywhere expected and at home." The rich take up something more of the world into man's life. They include the country as well as the town, the ocean-side, the White Hills, the Far West, and the old European homesteads of man, in their notion of available material. The world is his, who has money to go over it. WEALTH.

September 22.

Success consists in close appliance to the laws of the world, and, since those laws are intellectual and moral, an intellectual and moral obedience. Political Economy is . . . . a book wherein to read the life of man, and the ascendency of laws over all private and hostile influences. WEALTH.

One thing is forever good;
That one thing is Success, —
Dear to the Eumenides,
And to all the heavenly brood.
Who bides at home, nor looks abroad,
Carries the eagle, and masters the sword.
FATE.

September 21.

September 22.

September 23.

I admire great men of all classes, those who stand for facts, and for thoughts; I like rough and smooth, "Scourgers of God," and "Darlings of the human race." . . . . Sword and staff, or talents sword-like or staff-like, carry on the work of the world. But I find him greater, when he can abolish himself, ... the power so great, that the potentate is nothing. Then he is a monarch, who gives a constitution to his people; a pontiff, who preaches the equality of souls, and releases his servants from their barbarous homages; an emperor, who can spare his empire.

Representative Men.

September 24.

If we live truly, we shall see truly. It is as easy for the strong man to be strong, as it is for the weak to be weak. When we have new perception, we shall gladly disburden the memory of its hoarded treasures as old rubbish. When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn.

Self-Reliance.

Man carries the world in his head, the whole astronomy and chemistry suspended in a thought. Because the history of nature is charactered in his brain, therefore is he the prophet and discoverer of her secrets.

Nature.

September 23.

September 24.

September 25.

By these sunset clouds, these delicately emerging stars, with their private and ineffable glances. . . . . I am taught the poorness of our invention, the ugliness of towns and palaces. Art and luxury have early learned that they must work as enhancement and sequel to this original beauty. I am over-instructed for my return. Henceforth I shall be hard to please. I cannot go back to toys. I am grown expensive and sophisticated. I can no longer live without elegance: but a countryman shall be my master of revels. NATURE.

September 26.

The virtues are economists, but some of the vices are also. Thus, next to humility, I have noticed that pride is a pretty good husband. . . . . Pride is handsome, economical; pride eradicates so many vices, letting none subsist but itself, that it seems as if it were a great gain to exchange vanity for pride.

Pride can go without domestics, without fine clothes, ... can travel afoot, can talk with poor men, or sit silent well-contented in fine saloons. But vanity costs money. . . . . Only one drawback; proud people are intolerably selfish, and the vain are gentle and giving. WEALTH.

September 25.

September 26.

September 27.

A masterpiece of art has in the mind a fixed place in the chain of being, as much as a plant or a crystal.

Art.

Earth proudly wears the Parthenon,
As the best gem upon her zone ;
And Morning opes with haste her lids,
To gaze upon the Pyramids ;
O'er England's abbeys bends the sky,
As on its friends, with kindred eye ;
For, out of Thought's interior sphere,
These wonders rose to upper air ;
And Nature gladly gave them place,
Adopted them into her race,
And granted them an equal date
With Andes and with Ararat.

The Problem.

September 28.

I admire the love of nature in the Philoctetes. In reading those fine apostrophes to sleep, to the stars, rocks, mountains, and waves, I feel time passing away as an ebbing sea. I feel the eternity of man, the identity of his thought. The Greek had, it seems, the same fellow-beings as I. The sun and moon, water and fire, met his heart precisely as they meet mine. When a thought of Plato becomes a thought to me — when a truth that fired the soul of Pindar fires mine, time is no more.

History.

September 27.

September 28.

September 29.

The genius of humanity is the right point of view of history. The qualities abide; the men who exhibit them have now more, now less, and pass away; the qualities remain on another brow. No experience is more familiar. Once you saw phœnixes: they are gone; the world is not therefore disenchanted. The vessels on which you read sacred emblems turn out to be common pottery; but the sense of the pictures is sacred, and you may still read them transferred to the walls of the world.

Representative Men.

But the one fact that shines through all this plentitude of powers is, that, as is the receiver, so is the gift; that all these acquisitions are victories of the good brain and brave heart; that the world belongs to the energetic, belongs to the wise.

Resources.

September 30.

Hast thou named all the birds without a gun?
Loved the wood-rose, and left it on its stalk?
At rich men's tables eaten bread and pulse?
Unarmed, faced danger with a heart of trust?
And loved so well a high behavior,
In man or maid, that thou from speech refrained,
Nobility more nobly to repay?
Oh, be my friend, and teach me to be thine!

Forbearance

September 29.

September 30.

I will have never a noble,
No lineage counted great ;
Fishers and choppers and ploughmen
Shall constitute a state.

Go, cut down trees in the forest,
And trim the straightest boughs ;
Cut down trees in the forest,
And build me a wooden house.

Call the people together,
The young men and the sires,
The digger in the harvest field,
Hireling, and him that hires ;

And here in a pine state-house
They shall choose men to rule
In every needful faculty,
In church, and state, and school.

Lo, now ! if these poor men
Can govern the land and sea,
And make just laws below the sun,
As planets faithful be.

BOSTON HYMN

October.

My garden is a forest ledge
Which older forests bound;
The banks slope down to the blue lake-edge,
Then plunge to depths profound.

In my plot no tulips blow, —
Snow-loving pines and oaks instead;
And rank the savage maples grow
From spring's faint flush to autumn red.
. . . . . .
Keen ears can catch a syllable,
As if one spake to another,
In the hemlocks tall, untamable,
And what the whispering grasses smother.

Æolian harps in the pine
Ring with the song of the Fates;
Infant Bacchus in the vine, —
Far distant yet his chorus waits.

Canst thou copy in verse one chime
Of the wood-bell's peal and cry,
Write in a book the morning's prime,
Or match with words that tender sky?

Wonderful verse of the gods,
Of one import, of varied tone;
They chant the bliss of their abodes
To man imprisoned in his own.

My Garden.

October 1.

Solitary converse with nature; for thence are ejaculated sweet and dreadful words never uttered in libraries. Ah! the spring days, the summer dawns, the October woods! I confide that my reader knows these delicious secrets, has perhaps

"Slighted Minerva's learned tongue,
But leaped with joy when on the wind the shell of Clio rung."

INSPIRATION.

I 've come to live with you, sweet friends,
This home my minstrel journeying ends.
Many and subtle are my lays,
The latest better than the first,
For I can mend the happiest days,
And charm the anguish of the worst.

MAIDEN SPEECH OF THE ÆOLIAN HARP.

October 2.

The things we now esteem fixed shall, one by one, detach themselves, like ripe fruit, from our experience, and fall. The wind shall blow them none knows whither. The landscape, the figures, Boston, London, are facts as fugitive as any institution past, or any whiff of mist or smoke, and so is society, and so is the world. The soul looketh steadily forwards, creating a world before her, leaving worlds behind her. . . . . The soul knows only the soul, the web of events is the flowing robe in which she is clothed.

THE OVER-SOUL.

October 1.

October 2.

October 3.

Behold there in the wood the fine madman! He is a palace of sweet sounds and sights; he dilates; he is twice a man; he accosts the grass and the trees; he feels the blood of the violet, the clover, and the lily in his veins; and he talks with the brook that wets his foot. LOVE

This morn I climbed the misty hill,
And roamed the pastures through;
How danced thy form before my path
Amidst the deep-eyed dew.

THINE EYE STILL SHINED.

October 4.

A mind might ponder its thought for ages, and not gain so much self-knowledge as the passion of love shall teach it in a day. HISTORY.

Cupid is a casuist,
A mystic, and a cabalist, —
Can your lurking thought surprise,
And interpret your device. . . . .
Heralds high before him run;
He has ushers many a one;
He spreads his welcome where he goes,
And touches all things with his rose.
All things wait for and divine him, —
How shall I dare to malign him.

THE INITIAL LOVE.

October 3.

October 4.

October 5.

If we explore the literature of Heroism, we shall quickly come to Plutarch, who is its Doctor and historian. To him we owe the Brasidas, the Dion, the Epaminondas, the Scipio of old, and I must think we are more deeply indebted to him than to all the ancient writers. Each of his "Lives" is a refutation to the despondency and cowardice of our religious and political theorists. A wild courage, a stoicism not of the schools, but of the blood, shines in every anecdote. HEROISM.

Go with mean people and you think life is mean. Then read Plutarch, and the world is a proud place, peopled with men of positive quality, with heroes and demigods standing around us, who will not let us sleep. BOOKS.

October 6.

And what is Originality? It is being, being one's self, and reporting accurately what we see and are. Genius is, in the first instance, sensibility, the capacity of receiving just impressions from the external world, and the power of coördinating these after the laws of thought. QUOTATION AND ORIGINALITY.

In all the superior people I have met, I notice directness, truth spoken more truly, as if everything of obstruction, of malformation, had been trained away. BEHAVIOR.

October 5.

October 6.

October 7.

The best part of health is fine disposition. It is more essential than talent, even in the works of talent. Nothing will supply the want of sunshine to peaches, and, to make knowledge valuable, you must have the cheerfulness of wisdom. Whenever you are sincerely pleased you are nourished. The joy of the spirit indicates its strength. All healthy things are sweet tempered. BEAUTY.

The religious sentiment teaching the immensity of every moment, the indifference of magnitude, the present is all, the soul is God; — this lesson is great and greatest. Yet this, also, has limits for humanity. One must not seek to dwell in ethereal contemplation: so should the man decline into a monk, and stop short of his possible enlargement, The intellect is cheerful. PARNASSUS.

October 8.

Take the place and attitude which belong to you. and all men acquiesce. The world must be just. It leaves every man, with profound unconcern, to set his own rate. Hero or driveller, it meddles not in the matter. It will certainly accept your own measure of your doing and being, whether you sneak about and deny your own name, or whether you see your work produced to the concave sphere of the heavens, one with the revolution of the stars. SPIRITUAL LAWS.

October 7.

October 8.

October 9.

The best rule of reading will be a method from nature, and not a mechanical one of hours and pages. . . . . Let the student read what is proper to him, and not waste his memory on a crowd of mediocrities. As whole nations have derived their culture from a single book, — as the Bible has been the literature as well as the religion of large portions of Europe, — as Hafiz was the eminent genius of the Persians, Confucius of the Chinese, Cervantes of the Spaniards; so, perhaps, the human mind would be a gainer if all the secondary writers were lost, — say, in England, all but Shakespeare, Milton, and Bacon, — through the profounder study so drawn to those wonderful minds. Books.

October 10.

I value literary biography for the hints it furnishes from so many scholars, in so many countries, of what hygiene, what ascetic, what gymnastic, what social practices their experience suggested and approved. They are, for the most part, men who needed only a little wealth. Large estates, political relations, great hospitalities, would have been impediments to them. They are men whom a book could entertain, a new thought intoxicate, and hold them prisoners for years perhaps. Inspiration.

October 9.

Cervantes, 1547.

October 10.

October 11.

No greater men are now than ever were. A singular equality may be observed between the great men of the first and of the last ages. . . . . The arts and inventions of each period are only its costume, and do not invigorate men. . . . . Galileo with an opera-glass discovered a more splendid series of celestial phenomena than any one since. Columbus found the New World in an undecked boat. It is curious to see the periodical disuse and perishing of means and machinery. The great genius returns to essential man.

Self-Reliance.

October 12.

We are all inventors, each sailing out on a voyage of discovery, guided each by a private chart, of which there is no duplicate. The world is all gates, all opportunities, strings of tension waiting to be struck; the earth sensitive as iodine to light; the most plastic and impressionable medium, alive to every touch, and, whether searched by the plough of Adam, the sword of Cæsar, the boat of Columbus, or the telescope of Galileo, to every one of these experiments it makes a gracious response.

Resources.

Lo! I uncover the land
Which I hid of old time in the West,
As the sculptor uncovers the statue
When he has wrought his best.

Boston Hymn.

October 11.

October 12.

Landing of Columbus, 1492.

October 13.

If a man know the laws of nature better than other men, his nation cannot spare him ; nor if he know the power of numbers, the secret of geometry, of algebra, on which the computations of astronomy, of navigation, of machinery, rest. If he can converse better than any other, he rules the minds of men wherever he goes ; if he has imagination, he intoxicates men. If he has wit, he tempers despotism by epigrams : a song, a satire, a sentence, has played its part in great events. Eloquence a hundred times has turned the scale of war and peace at will. Progress of Culture.

October 14.

Not only things familiar and stale, but even the tragic and terrible, are comely, as they take their place in the pictures of memory. The river-bank, the weed at the water-side, the old house, the foolish person, — however neglected in the passing, — have a grace in the past. Spiritual Laws.

That Beauty is the normal state, is shown by the perpetual effort of Nature to attain it. We see faces every day which have a good type, but have been marred in the casting, a proof that we are all entitled to beauty. But our bodies do not fit us, but caricature and satirize us. Beauty.

October 13.

October 14.

October 15.

The attitudes of children are gentle, persuasive, royal, in their games and in their house-talk and in the street, before they have learned to cringe. 'T is impossible but thought disposes the limbs and the walk, and is masterly or secondary. No art can contravene it, or conceal it. Give me a thought, and my hands and legs and voice and face will all go right. And we are awkward for want of thought. The inspiration is scanty, and does not arrive at the extremities. Social Aims.

The one thing which we seek with insatiable desire is to forget ourselves, to be surprised out of our propriety, and to do something without knowing how or why. Circles.

October 16.

In common hours, society sits cold and statuesque. We all stand waiting, empty. . . . . Then cometh the god, and converts the statues into fiery men, and by a flash of his eye burns up the veil which shrouded all things. . . . . The facts which loomed so large in the fogs of yesterday, — property, climate, breeding, personal beauty, and the like, have strangely changed their proportions. All that we reckoned settled shakes and rattles ; and literatures, cities, climates, religions, leave their foundations, and dance before our eyes. Circles.

October 15.

October 16.

October 17.

The poet gives us the eminent experiences only — a god stepping from peak to peak, nor planting his foot but on a mountain.

Science does not know its debt to imagination. Goethe did not believe that a great naturalist could exist without this faculty. He was himself conscious of its help, which made him a prophet among the doctors. From this vision he gave brave hints to the zoölogist, the botanist, and the optician.

Poetry and Imagination.

Gentle pilgrim, if thou know
The gamut old of Pan,
And how the hills began,
The frank blessings of the hill
Fall on thee, as fall they will.

Monadnock.

October 18.

Shakespeare, Homer, Dante, Chaucer, saw the splendor of meaning that plays over the visible world; knew that a tree had another use than for apples, and corn another than for meal, and the ball of the earth, than for tillage and roads; that these things bore a second and finer harvest to the mind, being emblems of its thoughts, and conveying in all their natural history a certain mute commentary on human life.

Representative Men.

October 17.

October 18.

Louisa C. Perrin

October 19.

There are days which occur in this climate, at almost any season of the year, wherein the world reaches its perfection, when the air, the heavenly bodies, and the earth, make a harmony, as if nature would indulge her offspring. . . . . These halcyons may be looked for with a little more assurance in that pure October weather which we distinguish by the name of the Indian summer. The day immeasurably long, sleeps over the broad hills and warm wide fields. To have lived through all its sunny hours seems longevity enough. NATURE.

October 20.

Remember what befalls a city boy who goes for the first time into the October woods. He is suddenly initiated into a pomp and glory that brings to pass for him the dreams of romance. He is the king he dreamed he was ; he walks through tents of gold, through bowers of crimson, porphyry, and topaz, pavilion on pavilion, garlanded with vines, flowers, and sunbeams, with incense and music ; the leaves twinkle and pique and flatter him, and his eye and step are tempted on by what hazier distances to happier solitudes. All this happiness he owes only to his finer perception. The owner of the wood-lot finds only a number of discolored trees. SUCCESS.

October 19.

October 20.

October 21.

Coleridge, a catholic mind, with a hunger for ideas, with eyes looking before and after to the highest bards and sages, and who wrote and spoke the only high criticism in his time, — is one of those who save England from the reproach of no longer possessing the capacity to appreciate what rarest wit the island has yielded. Yet the misfortune of his life, his vast attempts but most inadequate performings, failing to accomplish any one masterpiece, seems to mark the closing of an era. Even in him the traditional Englishman was too strong for the philosopher. English Traits.

October 22.

We animate what we can, and we see only what we animate. Nature and books belong to the eyes that see them. It depends on the mood of the man, whether he shall see the sunset or the fine poem. There are always sunsets, and there is always genius; but only a few hours so serene that we can relish nature or criticism. Experience.

Not always can flowers, pearls, poetry, protestations, nor even home in another heart, content the awful soul that dwells in clay. It arouses itself at last from these endearments, as toys, and puts on the harness, and aspires to vast and universal aims. Love.

October 21.

S. T. Coleridge, 1772.

October 22.

October 23.

In poetry we say we require the miracle. The bee flies among the flowers, and gets mint and marjoram, and generates a new product, which is not mint and marjoram, but honey; the chemist mixes hydrogen and oxygen to yield a new product, which is not these, but water; and the poet listens to conversation, and beholds all objects in nature, to give back, not them, but a new and transcendent whole.

Poetry and Imagination.

October 24.

Be thou ware where Saadi dwells;
Wisdom of the gods is he, —
Entertain it reverently.
Gladly round that golden lamp
Sylvan deities encamp,
And simple maids and noble youth
Are welcome to the man of truth.
Most welcome they who need him most,
They feed the spring which they exhaust;
For greater need
Draws better deed:
But, critic, spare thy vanity,
Nor show thy pompous parts,
To vex with odious subtlety
The cheerer of men's hearts. Saadi.

October 23.

October 24.

October 25.

No lover of poetry can spare Chaucer, or should grudge the short study required to command the archaisms of his English, and the skill to read the melody of his verse. . . . . I think he has lines of more force than any English writer except Shakespeare. . . . . He is always strong, facile, and pertinent, and with what vivacity of style through all the range of his pictures, comic or tragic! He knows the language of joy and of despair.

PARNASSUS.

The influence of Chaucer is conspicuous in all our early literature; and, more recently, ... in the whole society of English writers, a large unacknowledged debt is easily traced. One is charmed with the opulence which feeds so many pensioners.

REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

October 26.

The true bards have been noted for their firm and cheerful temper. Homer lies in sunshine; Chaucer is glad and erect. Not less sovereign and cheerful, — much more sovereign and cheerful, is the tone of Shakespeare. His name suggests joy and emancipation to the heart of men. If he should appear in any company of human souls, who would not march in his troop? He touches nothing that does not borrow health and longevity from his festal style.

REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

October 25.

Chaucer died 1400.

October 26.

October 27.

All minds quote. Old and new make the warp and woof of every moment. There is no thread that is not a twist of these two strands. We quote not only books and proverbs, but arts, sciences, religion, customs, and laws; nay, we quote temples and houses, tables and chairs, by imitation.

We are as much informed of a writer's genius by what he selects as by what he originates. We read the quotation with his eyes, and find a new and fervent sense; as a passage from one of the poets, well recited, borrows new interest from the rendering.

Quotation and Originality.

October 28.

Geology, a science of forty or fifty summers, has had the effect to throw an air of novelty and mushroom speed over entire history. The oldest empires — what we called venerable antiquity — now that we have true measures of duration, show like creations of yesterday.

Progress of Culture.

Ages are thy days,
Thou grand affirmer of the present tense,
And type of permanence!
Firm ensign of the fatal Being,
Amid these coward shapes of joy and grief,
That will not bide the seeing!

Monadnock.

October 27.

October 28.

John Gardner Greene
1904

October 29.

These fine fruits of judgment, poesy, and sentiment, when once their hour is struck, and the world is ripe for them, know as well as coarser how to feed and replenish themselves, and maintain their stock alive, and multiply; for roses and violets renew their race like oaks, and flights of painted moths are as old as the Alleghanies. The balance of the world is kept, and dewdrop and haze and the pencil of light are as long-lived as chaos and darkness.

Poetry and Imagination.

October 30.

Nature an enormous system, but in mass and in particle curiously available to the humblest need of the little creature that walks on the earth!

Progress of Culture.

I have seen what glories of climate, of summer mornings and evenings, of midnight sky — I have enjoyed the benefits of all this complex machinery of arts and civilization, and its results of comfort. The good Power can easily provide me millions more as good. Shall I hold on with both hands to every paltry possession? All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen.

Immortality.

October 29.

October 30.

The mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel ;
And the former called the latter "Little Prig ;"
Bun replied,
"You are doubtless very big ;
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together,
To make up a year
And a sphere.
And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.
If I 'm not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so spry.
I 'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track ;
Talents differ ; all is well and wisely put ;
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut." FABLE.

Cities of mortals woe-begone
Fantastic care derides,
But in the serious landscape lone
Stern benefit abides.

. . . . . .

There the great Planter plants
Of fruitful worlds the grain,
And with a million spells enchants
The souls that walk in pain.

Still on the seeds of all he made
The rose of beauty burns;
Through times that wear, and forms that fade,
Immortal youth returns.

. . . . . .

Aloft, in secret veins of air,
Blows the sweet breath of song,
Oh, few to scale those uplands dare,
Though they to all belong!

See thou bring not to field or stone
The fancies found in books;
Leave authors' eyes, and fetch your own,
To brave the landscape's looks.

Oblivion here thy wisdom is,
Thy thrift, the sleep of cares;
For a proud idleness like this
Crowns all thy mean affairs.

WALDEINSAMKEIT.

November.

Ah me ! it was my childhood's thought,
If He should make my web a blot
On life's fair picture of delight,
My heart's content would find it right.
But oh, these waves and leaves, —
When happy stoic Nature grieves, —
No human speech so beautiful
As their murmurs mine to lull.
On this altar God hath built
I lay my vanity and guilt ;
Nor me can Hope or Passion urge
Hearing as now the lofty dirge
Which blasts of Northern mountains hymn,
Nature's funeral, high and dim, —
Sable pageantry of clouds,
Mourning summer laid in shrouds.

The Nun's Aspiration.

November 1.

We do not know to-day whether we are busy or idle. In times when we thought ourselves indolent, we have afterwards discovered that much was accomplished, and much was begun in us. All our days are so unprofitable while they pass, that 't is wonderful where or when we ever got anything of this which we call wisdom, poetry, virtue. We never got it on any dated calendar day. Some heavenly days must have been intercalated somewhere, like those that Hermes won with dice of the Moon, that Osiris might be born. Illusions.

November 2.

When I was born,
From all the seas of strength Fate filled a chalice,
Saying, "This be thy portion, child; this chalice,
Less than a lily's, thou shalt daily draw
From my great arteries, — nor less, nor more."
All substances the cunning chemist Time
Melts down into that liquor of my life, —
Friends, foes, joys, fortunes, beauty, and disgust.
And whether I am angry or content,
Indebted or insulted, loved or hurt,
All he distils into sidereal wine
And brims my little cup; heedless, alas!
Of all he sheds how little it will hold,
How much runs over on the desert sands.

The Day's Ration.

NOVEMBER 1.

NOVEMBER 2.

November 3.

Don't hang a dismal picture on the wall, and do not daub with sables and glooms in your conversation. Don't be a cynic and disconsolate preacher. Don't bewail and bemoan. Omit the negative propositions. Nerve us with incessant affirmatives. Don't waste yourself in rejection, nor bark against the bad, but chant the beauty of the good.

Society and Solitude.

How wearisome the grammarian, the phrenologist, the political or religious fanatic, or indeed any possessed mortal whose balance is lost by the exaggeration of a single topic. It is incipient insanity.

Intellect.

November 4.

I honor health as the first muse, and sleep as the condition of health. Sleep benefits mainly by the sound health it produces. . . . . Life is in short cycles or periods ; we are quickly tired, but we have rapid rallies. A man is spent by his work, starved, prostrate ; he will not lift his hand to save his life ; he can never think more. He sinks into deep sleep and wakes with renewed youth, with hope, courage, fertile in resources, and keen for daring adventure.

Inspiration.

November 3.

November 4.

November 5.

Sensible men are very rare. A sensible man does not brag, avoids introducing the names of his creditable companions, omits himself as habitually as another man obtrudes himself in the discourse, and is content with putting his fact or theme simply on its ground. You shall not tell me that your commercial house, your partners, or yourself are of importance; you shall not tell me that you have learned to know men; you shall make me feel that; your saying so unsays it. GREATNESS.

November 6.

The English power resides also in their dislike of change. They have difficulty in bringing their reason to act, and on all occasions use their memory first. As soon as they have rid themselves of some grievance, and settled the better practice, they make haste to fix it as a finality, and never wish to hear of alteration more. . . . . The favorite phrase of their law is, "a custom whereof the memory of man runneth not back to the contrary." The barons say, "*Nolumus mutari;*" and the cockneys stifle the curiosity of the foreigner on the reason of any practice, with, "Lord, sir, it was always so." . . . . All their statesmen learn the irresistibility of the tide of custom, and have invented many fine phrases to cover this slowness of perception. ENGLISH TRAITS.

November 6.

November 7.

The Past is for us; but the sole terms on which it can become ours are its subordination to the Present. Only an inventor knows how to borrow, and every man is or should be an inventor.

Quotation and Originality.

I serve you not, if you I follow,
Shadowlike, o'er hill and hollow;
And bend my fancy to your leading,
All too nimble for my treading.
When the pilgrimage is done,
And we 've the landscape overrun,
I am bitter, vacant, thwarted,
And your heart is unsupported.

Etienne de la Boéce.

November 8.

Whilst the great man sits on the cushion of advantages, he goes to sleep. When he is pushed, tormented, defeated, he has a chance to learn something; he has been put on his wits, on his manhood; he has gained facts; learns his ignorance; is cured of the insanity of conceit; has got moderation and real skill.

Compensation.

Instead of feeling a poverty when we encounter a great man, let us treat the new-comer like a travelling geologist, who passes through our estate, and shows us good slate, or limestone, or anthracite, in our brush pasture.

Experience.

November 7.

November 8.

November 9.

Eloquence must be grounded on the plainest narrative. Afterwards, it may warm itself until it exhales symbols of every kind and color, speaks only through the most poetic forms; but, first and last, it must be at bottom a biblical statement of fact. . . . . If you would lift me, you must be on higher ground. If you would liberate me, you must be free. If you would correct my false view of facts, — hold up to me the same facts in the true order of thought.

The power of Chatham, of Pericles, of Luther, rested on this strength of character, which, because it did not and could not fear anybody, made nothing of their antagonists, and became sometimes exquisitely provoking and sometimes terrific to these.

ELOQUENCE.

November 10.

In strictness, the vital refinements are the moral and intellectual steps. The appearance . . . . in modern Christendom, of the realists Huss, Savonarola, and Luther, are casual facts which carry forward races to new convictions, and elevate the rule of life. In the presence of these agencies, it is frivolous to insist on the invention of printing or gunpowder, of steam-power or gas-light, ... which are toys thrown off from that security, freedom, and exhilaration which a healthy morality creates in society.

CIVILIZATION.

NOVEMBER 10.

Martin Luther, 1483.

November 11.

The word of ambition at the present day is Culture. Whilst all the world is in pursuit of power, and of wealth as a means of power, culture corrects the theory of success. A man is the prisoner of his power. A topical memory makes him an almanac; a talent for debate, a disputant; skill to get money makes him a miser — that is, a beggar. Culture reduces these inflammations by invoking the aid of other powers against the dominant talent, and by appealing to the rank of powers.

CULTURE.

November 12.

Health of mind consists in the perception of law. Its dignity consists in being under the law. Its goodness is the most generous extension of our private interests to the dignity and generosity of ideas. Nothing seems to me so excellent as a belief in the laws. It communicates nobleness, and, as it were, an asylum in temples to the loyal soul.

IMMORTALITY.

For there 's no sequestered grot,
Lone mountain tarn, or isle forgot,
But Justice, journeying in the sphere,
Daily stoops to harbor there. ASTRÆA.

November 11.

November 12.

November 13.

No man ever forgot the visitations of that power to his heart and brain, which created all things new; which was the dawn in him of music, poetry, and art; which made the face of nature radiant with purple light, the morning and the night varied enchantments; when a single tone of one voice could make the heart bound, and the most trivial circumstance associated with one form is put in the amber of memory; when he became all eye when one was present, and all memory when one was gone.

Love.

O fair and stately maid, whose eyes
Were kindled in the upper skies
At the same torch that lighted mine;
For so I must interpret still
Thy sweet dominion o'er my will,
A sympathy divine.

To Eva.

November 14.

The least activity of the intellectual powers redeems us in a degree from the conditions of time. In sickness, in languor, give us a strain of poetry, or a profound sentence, and we are refreshed; or produce a volume of Plato, or Shakespeare, or remind us of their names, and instantly we come into a feeling of longevity.

The Over-Soul.

November 13.

November 14.

November 15.

The impressions on the imagination make the great days of life: the book, the landscape, or the personality which did not stay on the surface of the eye or ear, but penetrated to the inward sense, agitates us, and is not forgotten.

Poetry and Imagination.

As sunbeams stream through liberal space
And nothing jostle or displace,
So waved the pine-tree through my thought
And fanned the dreams it never brought.

Woodnotes.

November 16.

There is anything but humiliation in the homage men pay to a great man; it is sympathy, love of the same things, effort to reach them — the expression of their hope of what they shall become when the obstructions of their mal-formation and mal-education shall be trained away. Great men shall not impoverish, but enrich us. Great men — the age goes on their credit; but all the rest, when their wires are continued, and not cut, can do as signal things, and in new parts of nature.

Progress of Culture.

If we recall the rare hours when we encountered the best persons, we then found ourselves, and then first society seemed to exist.

Society and Solitude.

November 15.

November 16.

November 17.

Every good poem that I know I recall by its rhythm also. Rhyme is a pretty good measure of the latitude and opulence of a writer. If unskilful, he is at once detected by the poverty of his chimes. A small well-worn, sprucely brushed vocabulary serves him. Now try Spenser, Marlowe, Chapman, and see how wide they fly for weapons, and how rich and lavish their profusion. In their rhythm is no manufacture, but a vortex, or musical tornado, which falling on words and the experience of a learned mind, whirls these materials into the same grand order as planets and moons obey, and seasons, and monsoons. Poetry and Imagination.

November 18.

'T is a problem of metaphysics to define the province of Fancy and Imagination. The words are often used, and the things confounded. Imagination respects the cause. It is the vision of an inspired soul reading arguments and affirmations in all nature of that which it is driven to say. But as this soul is released a little from its passion, and at leisure plays with the resemblances and types for amusement, and not for its moral end, we call its action Fancy. . . . . Bunyan, in pain for his soul, wrote "Pilgrim's Progress;" Quarles, after he was quite cool, wrote "Emblems."

Poetry and Imagination.

November 17.

November 18.

November 19.

The small enchanter nothing can withstand, — no seniority of age, no gravity of character; uncles, aunts, grandsires, grandams, fall an easy prey; he conforms to nobody, all conform to him. On the strongest shoulders he rides, and pulls the hair of laurelled heads. . . . . He asks so little that all reason and all nature are on his side. His ignorance is more charming than all knowledge, and his little sins more bewitching than any virtue.

DOMESTIC LIFE.

November 20.

I hearken for thy household cheer,
O eloquent child!
Whose voice, an equal messenger,
Conveyed thy meaning mild.
What though the pains and joys
Whereof it spoke were toys
Fitting his age and ken,
Yet fairest dames and bearded men,
Who heard the sweet request,
So gentle, wise, and grave,
Bended with joy to his behest,
And let the world's affairs go by. . . . .
Still plotting how their hungry ear
That winsome voice again might hear.

THRENODY.

November 19.

November 20.

November 21.

We watch in children with pathetic interest, the degree in which they possess recuperative force. When they are hurt by us, or by each other, or go to the bottom of the class, or miss the annual prizes, or are beaten in the game, — if they lose heart, and remember the mischance in their chamber at home, they have a serious check. But if they have the buoyancy and resistance that preoccupies them with new interest in the new moment, — the wounds cicatrize, and the fibre is the tougher for the hurt.

Power.

November 22.

The perception of matter is made the common-sense, and for cause. This was the cradle, this the go-cart, of the human child. We must learn the homely laws of fire and water; we must feed, wash, plant, build. These are ends of necessity, and first in the order of nature. Poverty, frost, famine, disease, debt, are the beadles and guardsmen that hold us to common-sense. The intellect, yielded up to itself, cannot supersede this tyrannic necessity.

Poetry and Inspiration.

Try the rough water as well as the smooth. Rough water can teach lessons worth knowing. When the state is unquiet, personal qualities are more than ever decisive.

Essay.

November 21.

November 22.

November 23.

The motive of science was the extension of man, on all sides, into Nature, till his hands should touch the stars, his eyes see through the earth, his ears understand the language of beast and bird and the sense of the wind; and through his sympathy heaven and earth should talk with him. Beauty.

In old Rome the public roads beginning at the Forum proceeded north, south, east, west, to the centre of every province of the empire, making each market-town of Persia, Spain, and Britain pervious to the soldiers of the capital: so out of the human heart go, as it were, highways to the heart of every object in nature, to reduce it under the dominion of man. History.

November 24.

By Sybarites beguiled,
He shall no task decline;
Merlin's mighty line
Extremes of nature reconciled, —
Bereaved a tyrant of his will,
And made the lion mild.
Songs can the tempest still,
Scattered on the stormy air,
Mould the year to fair increase,
And bring in poetic peace. Merlin

November 23.

November 24.

November 25.

The use of literature is to afford us a platform whence we may command a view of our present life, a purchase by which we may move it. We fill ourselves with ancient learning, install ourselves the best we can in Greek, in Punic, in Roman houses, only that we may wiselier see French, English, and American houses and modes of living.

Circles.

A man known to us only as a celebrity in politics or in trade, gains largely in our esteem if we discover that he has some intellectual taste or skill. . . . . So, if in travelling in the dreary wilderness of Arkansas or Texas, we should observe on the next seat a man reading Horace, or Martial, or Calderon, we should wish to hug him. Culture.

November 26.

There remains the indefeasible persistency of the individual to be himself. One leaf, one blade of grass, one meridian, does not resemble another. Every mind is different; and the more it is unfolded, the more pronounced is that difference.

Quotation and Originality.

Nature is a mutable cloud, which is always and never the same. She casts the same thought into troops of forms, as a poet makes twenty fables with one moral.

History

November 25.

November 26.

November 27.

In the noon and the afternoon of life we still throb at the recollection of days when happiness was not happy enough, but must be drugged by the relish of pain and fear ; for he touched the secret of the matter, who said of love —

"All other pleasures are not worth its pains,"

and when the day was not long enough, but the night, too, must be consumed in keen recollections ; when the head boiled all night on the pillow with the generous deed it resolved on ; when the moonlight was a pleasing fever, and the stars were letters, and the flowers ciphers, and the air was coined into song.

LOVE.

November 28.

How easily, if fate would suffer it, we might keep forever these beautiful limits, and adjust ourselves, once for all, to the perfect calculation of the kingdom of known cause and effect. In the street and in the newspapers, life appears so plain a business, that manly resolution and adherence to the multiplication-table through all weathers, will insure success. But ah ! presently comes a day, or is it only a half-hour, with its angel-whispering — which discomfits the conclusions of nations and of years !

EXPERIENCE.

November 27.

November 28.

November 29.

Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Raleigh, are men of great figure and of few deeds. . . . . Somewhat resided in these men which begot an expectation that outran all their performance. The largest part of their power was latent. This is what we call Character, — a reserved force which acts directly by presence, and without means. . . . . The purest literary talent appears at one time great, at another time small, but character is of a stellar and undiminishable greatness. CHARACTER.

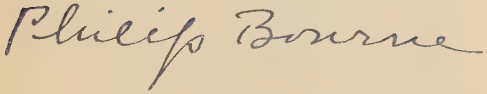
November 30.

What fact more conspicuous in modern history than the creation of the gentleman? Chivalry is that, and loyalty is that. . . . . The word *gentleman*, which, like the word Christian, must hereafter characterize the present and the few preceding centuries, by the importance attached to it, is a homage to personal and incommunicable properties. . . . . An element which unites persons of every country; makes them intelligible and agreeable to each other; and is somewhat so precise, that it is at once felt if an individual lack the masonic sign, cannot be any casual product. . . . . It is made of the spirit, more than of the talent of men, and is a compound result, into which every great force enters as an ingredient, namely, virtue, wit, beauty, wealth, and power. MANNERS.

November 29.

Sir Philip Sidney, 1554.

November 30.



EXPERIENCE.

The lords of life, the lords of life, —
I saw them pass,
In their own guise,
Like and unlike,
Portly and grim, —
Use and Surprise,
Surface and Dream,
Succession swift and spectral Wrong,
Temperament without a tongue,
And the inventor of the game
Omnipresent without name ; —
Some to see, some to be guessed,
They marched from east to west :
Little man, least of all,
Among the legs of his guardians tall,
Walked about with puzzled look ;
Him by the hand dear Nature took,
Dearest Nature, strong and kind,
Whispered, " Darling, never mind !
To-morrow they will wear another face,
The founder thou ; these are thy race ! "

December.

The frost-king ties my fumbling feet,
Sings in my ears, my hands are stones,
Curdles the blood to the marble bones,
Tugs at the heart-strings, numbs the sense,
And hems in life with narrowing fence.
Well, in this broad bed lie and sleep,
The punctual stars will vigil keep,
Embalmed by purifying cold,
The winds shall sing their dead-march old,
The snow is no ignoble shroud,
The moon thy mourner, and the cloud.

The Titmouse.

December 1.

An illusion haunts us, that a long duration, as a year, a decade, a century, is valuable. But an old French sentence says, "God works in moments," — "*En peu d'heure Dieu labeure.*" We ask for long life, but 't is deep life, or grand moments, that signify. Let the measure of time be spiritual, not mechanical. . . . .

I am of the opinion of Glauco, who said, "The measure of life, O Socrates, is, with the wise, the speaking and hearing such discourses as yours."

He only can enrich me who can recommend to me the space between sun and sun. 'T is the measure of a man, — his apprehension of a day. . . . . And him I reckon the most learned scholar, not who can unearth for me the buried dynasties of Sesostris and Ptolemy, but who can unfold the theory of this particular Wednesday.

Works and Days.

December 2.

Must time and tide forever run?
Will never my winds go sleep in the west?
Will never my wheels which whirl the sun
And satellites have rest?

Too much of donning and doffing,
Too slow the rainbow fades,
I weary of my robe of snow,
My leaves and my cascades.

Song of Nature.

December 1.

December 2.

December 3.

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven.

The Snow-Storm.

France is, by its natural contrast, a kind of blackboard on which English character draws its own traits in chalk.

English Traits.

December 4.

In the decomposition and asphyxia that followed all this materialism, Carlyle was driven by his disgust at the pettiness and the cant, into the preaching of Fate. In comparison with all this rottenness, any check, any cleansing, though by fire, seemed desirable and beautiful. He saw little difference in the gladiators, or the "causes" for which they combated; the one comfort was, that they were all going speedily into the abyss together. And his imagination, finding no nutriment in any creation, avenged itself by celebrating the majestic beauty of the laws of decay.

English Traits.

There is nothing deeper in his constitution than his humor, than the considerate, condescending good-nature with which he looks at every object in existence, as a man might look at a mouse.

Impressions of Carlyle.

December 3.

December 4.

Thomas Carlyle, 1795.

December 5.

What a difference in the hospitality of minds! Inestimable is he to whom we can say what we cannot say to ourselves. Others are involuntarily hurtful to us, and bereave us of the power of thought, impound and imprison us. As, when there is sympathy, there needs but one wise man in a company, and all are wise, — so, a blockhead makes a blockhead of his companion. Wonderful power to benumb possesses this brother. When he comes into the office or public room, the society dissolves; one after another slips out, and the apartment is at his disposal. Considerations by the Way.

December 6.

One man appears whose nature is to all men's eyes conserving and constructive: his presence supposes a well-ordered society, agriculture, trade, large institutions, and empire. If these did not exist, they would begin to exist through his endeavors. Therefore, he cheers and comforts men, who feel all this in him very readily.

Representative Men.

To every creature nature added a little violence of direction in its proper path, a shove to put it on its way; in every instance, a slight generosity, a drop too much. Without a spice of bigot and fanatic, no excitement, no efficiency. Nature.

DECEMBER 6.

Edgar LeRoy Kinsley

December 7.

There is somewhat touching in the madness with which the passing age mischooses the object on which all candles shine, and all eyes are turned; the care with which it registers every trifle touching Queen Elizabeth, and King James, and the Essexes, Leicesters, Burleighs, and Buckinghams; and lets pass without a single valuable note the founder of another dynasty, which alone will cause the Tudor dynasty to be remembered, — the man on whose thoughts the foremost people of the world are now for some ages to be nourished, and minds to receive this and not another bias. . . . . You cannot see the mountain near. . . . . Now, literature, philosophy, and thought are Shakespearized. His mind is the horizon beyond which, at present, we do not see. REPRESENTATIVE MEN.

December 8.

Seethed in mists of Penmanmaur,
Taught by Plinlimmon's Druid power,
England's genius filled all measure
Of heart and soul, of strength and pleasure,
Gave to the mind its emperor,
And life was larger than before:
Nor sequent centuries could hit
Orbit and sum of SHAKESPEARE'S wit.
The men who lived with him became
Poets, for the air was fame. SOLUTION

December 7.

December 8.

December 9.

To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men, — that is genius. Speak your latent conviction, and it shall be the universal sense; for the inmost in due time becomes the outmost, — and our first thought is rendered back to us by the trumpets of the Last Judgment. Familiar as the voice of the mind is to each, the highest merit we ascribe to Moses, Plato, and Milton is, that they set at naught books and traditions, and spoke not what men but what they thought.

Self-Reliance

Milton was the stair or high table-land to let down the English genius from the summits of Shakespeare.

English Traits.

December 10.

Genius hovers with his sunshine and music close by the darkest and deafest eras. . . . . The world is young: the former great men call to us affectionately. We too must write Bibles, to unite again the heavens and the earthly world. The secret of genius is to suffer no fiction to exist for us; to realize all that we know; in the high refinement of modern life, in arts, in sciences, in books, in men, to exact good faith, reality, and a purpose; and first, last, midst, and without end, to honor every truth by use.

Representative Men.

December 9.

John Milton, 1608.

December 10.

December 11.

There is no luck in literary reputation. They who make up the final verdict upon every book are not the partial and noisy readers of the hour when it appears; but a court as of angels, a public not to be bribed, not to be entreated, and not to be overawed, decides upon every man's title to fame. Only those books come down which deserve to last. . . . . There are not in the world at any one time more than a dozen persons who read and understand Plato: — never enough to pay for an edition of his works; yet to every generation these come duly down, for the sake of those few persons, as if God brought them in his hand.

Spiritual Laws.

December 12.

The task of selection is easiest in poetry. What a signal convenience is fame. . . . . The world selects for us the best, and we select from these our best.

Parnassus.

Poetry must be affirmative. It is the piety of the intellect. "Thus saith the Lord," should begin the song. . . . . Bring us poetry which finds its rhymes and cadences in the rhymes and iterations of nature, and is the gift to men of new images and symbols, each the ensign and oracle of an age; poetry which tastes the world and reports of it, upbuilding the world again in thought.

Poetry and Imagination.

December 11.

December 12.

December 13.

Put any company of people together with freedom for conversation, and a rapid self-distribution takes place into sets and pairs. The best are accused of exclusiveness. It would be more true to say, they separate as oil from water, as children from old people, without love or hatred in the matter, each seeking his like. Society and Solitude.

Nor less the eternal poles
Of tendency distribute souls.
There need no vows to bind
Whom not each other seek, but find.
They give and take no pledge or oath, —
Nature is the bond of both.

The Celestial Love.

December 14.

It is long ere we discover how rich we are. Our history, we are sure, is quite tame: we have nothing to write, nothing to infer. But our wiser years still run back to the despised recollections of childhood, and always we are fishing up some wonderful article out of that pond; until, by and by, we begin to suspect that the biography of the one foolish person we know is, in reality, nothing less than the miniature paraphrase of the hundred volumes of the Universal History. Intellect.

December 13.

December 14.

December 15.

The imagination wakened brings its own language, and that is always musical. . . . . Whatever language the bard uses, the secret of tone is at the heart of the poem. Every great master is such by this power. The true inspiration always brings it. Perhaps it cannot be analyzed; but we all yield to it. It is the life of the good ballads; it is in the German hymns which Wesley translated; it is in the "Marseillaise;" it gave their value to the chants of the old Romish and of the English Church. Poems may please by their talent and ingenuity; but when they charm us, it is because they have this quality, for this is the union of nature with thought. PARNASSUS.

December 16.

Merlin's blows are strokes of fate,
Chiming with the forest tone
When boughs buffet boughs in the wood;
Chiming with the gasp and moan
Of the ice-imprisoned flood;
With the pulse of manly hearts;
With the voice of orators;
With the din of city arts;
With the cannonade of wars;
With the marches of the brave;
And prayers of might from martyrs' cave.

MERLIN.

December 15.

December 16.

December 17.

The strong bent of nature is seen in the proportion which this topic of personal relations usurps in the conversation of society. . . . . What books in the circulating libraries circulate? How we glow over these novels of passion, when the story is told with any spark of truth and nature! . . . . All mankind love a lover. . . . . The passion makes the clown gentle and gives the coward heart. Into the most pitiful and abject it will infuse a heart and courage to defy the world. . . . . He is a new man, with new perceptions, new and keener purposes, and a religious solemnity of character and aims.

Love.

December 18.

Beauty without grace is the hook without the bait. Beauty without expression tires. . . . . Petulant old gentlemen, who have chanced to suffer some intolerable weariness from pretty people . . . . affirm that the secret of ugliness consists not in irregularity, but in being uninteresting. Beauty.

I have seen manners that make a similar impression with personal beauty, that give us the like exhilaration, and refine us like that; and in memorable experiences, they are suddenly better than beauty. But they must be marked by fine perception, they must always show self-control. Then they must be inspired by the good heart.

Behavior.

DECEMBER 17.

Mary Russell Hodge

DECEMBER 18.

My father
John Howard Nichols 1837-1915
Stephen Greene
1914

December 19.

No truth so sublime but it may be trivial to-morrow in the light of new thoughts. People wish to be settled; only as far as they are unsettled is there any hope for them.

Life is a series of surprises. We do not guess to-day the mood, the pleasure, the power of to-morrow, when we are building up our being. Of lower states, — of acts of routine and sense, — we can tell somewhat; but the masterpieces of God, the total growths and universal movements of the soul, he hideth; they are incalculable. Circles.

Every really able man, if you talk sincerely with him, considers his work, however much admired, as far short of what it should be. What is this Better, this flying Ideal, but the perpetual promise of his Creator? Immortality.

December 20.

Yet whirl the glowing wheels once more,
And mix the bowl again;
Seethe, Fate! the ancient elements,
Heat, cold, wet, dry, and peace, and pain.

Let war and trade and creeds and song
Blend, ripen race on race,
The sunburnt world a man shall breed
Of all the zones and countless days.

Song of Nature.

DECEMBER 19.

DECEMBER 20.

December 21.

Our helm is given up to a better guidance than our own; the course of events is quite too strong for any helmsman, and our little wherry is taken in tow by the ship of the great Admiral which knows the way, and has the force to draw men and states and planets to their good.

Such and so potent is this high method by which the Divine Providence sends the chiefest benefits under the mask of calamities, that I do not think we shall by any perverse ingenuity prevent the blessing.

Fortune of the Republic.

December 22.

The word of the Lord by night
To the watching Pilgrims came,
As they sat by the seaside,
And filled their hearts with flame.

God said, I am tired of kings,
I suffer them no more;
Up to my ear the morning brings
The outrage of the poor.

. . . . . .

My angel, — his name is Freedom, —
Choose him to be your king;
He shall cut pathways east and west,
And fend you with his wing.

Boston Hymn.

December 21.

December 22.

Landing of the Pilgrims, 1620.

December 23.

It is said that the world owes the world more than the world can pay. . . . . I do not think this general insolvency, which involves in some sort all the population, to be the reason of the difficulty experienced in bestowing gifts; since it is always so pleasant to be generous, though very vexatious to pay debts. But the impediment lies in the choosing. . . . . For common gifts, necessity makes pertinences and beauty every day. But our tokens of compliment and love are for the most part barbarous. The only gift is a portion of thyself. . . . .

But I fear to breathe any treason against the majesty of love, which is the genius and god of gifts, to whom we must not affect to prescribe. Let him give kingdoms or flower-leaves indifferently.

Gifts.

December 24.

We arraign society if it do not give us besides earth, and fire, and water, opportunity, love, reverence, and objects of veneration. Gifts.

For this is Love's nobility, —
Not to scatter bread and gold,
Goods and raiment bought and sold;
But to hold fast his simple sense,
And speak the speech of innocence, ...
For he that feeds men serveth few;
He serves all who dares be true.

The Celestial Love.

December 23.

December 24.

December 25.

'T is certain that worship stands in some commanding relation to the health of man, and to his highest powers, so as to be, in some manner, the source of intellect. All the great ages have been ages of belief. I mean, when there was any extraordinary power of performance, when great national movements began, when arts appeared, when heroes existed, when poems were made, the human soul was in earnest, and had fixed its thoughts on spiritual verities. It is true that genius takes its rise out of the mountains of rectitude; that all beauty and power which men covet, are somehow born out of that Alpine district.

Worship.

December 26.

Ever the fiery Pentecost
Girds with one flame the countless host,
Trances the heart through chanting choirs,
And through the priest the mind inspires.
The word unto the prophet spoken
Was writ on tables yet unbroken;
The word by seers or sibyls told,
In groves of oak, or fanes of gold,
Still floats upon the morning wind,
Still whispers to the willing mind.
One accent of the Holy Ghost
The heedless world hath never lost.

The Problem.

December 25.

December 26.

December 27.

Neither is life long enough for friendship. That is a serious and majestic affair, like a royal presence, or a religion, and not a postilion's dinner to be eaten on the run. Considerations by the Way.

To-day, when friends approach, and every hour
Brings book, or star-bright scroll of genius,
The little cup will hold not a bead more,
And all the costly liquor runs to waste.

The Day's Ration.

December 28.

When life has been well spent, age is a loss of what it can well spare. . . . . But the central wisdom, which was old in infancy, is young in fourscore years, and, dropping off obstructions, leaves in happy subjects the mind purified and wise. I have heard that whoever loves is in no condition old.

Old Age.

Spring still makes spring in the mind,
When sixty years are told;
Love wakes anew this throbbing heart,
And we are never old.
Over the winter glaciers,
I see the summer glow,
And, through the wild-piled snowdrift,
The warm rosebuds below.

The World-Soul.

December 27.

December 28.

December 29.

What are these delights in the vast and permanent and strong, but approximations and resemblances of what is entire and sufficing, creative and self-sustaining life? For the Creator keeps his word with us. These long-lived or long-enduring objects are to us, as we see them, only symbols of somewhat in us far longer lived. Our passions, our endeavors, have something ridiculous and mocking, if we come to so hasty an end.

We cannot prove our faith by syllogisms. The argument refuses to form in the mind. You cannot make a written theory or demonstration of this. It must be sacredly treated. Not by literature or theology, but only by rare integrity, by a man permeated and perfumed with airs of heaven, — with manliest or womanliest enduring love, — can the vision be clear.

—•— Immortality.

December 30.

Let a man learn to look for the permanent in the mutable and fleeting; let him learn to bear the disappearance of things he was wont to reverence, without losing his reverence; let him learn that he is here, not to work, but to be worked upon; and that, though abyss open under abyss, and opinion displace opinion, all are at last contained in the Eternal Cause.

"If my bark sink, 't is to another sea."

Representative Men.

December 29.

December 30.

When the scanty shores are full
With Thoughts perilous, whirling pool;
When frail Nature can no more,
Then the Spirit strikes the hour:
My servant Death, with solving rite,
Pours finite into infinite. . . . .

Fair the soul's recess and shrine,
Magic-built to last a season;
Masterpiece of love benign
Fairer that expansive reason
Whose omen 't is, and sign.
Wilt thou not ope thy heart to know
What rainbows teach, and sunsets show?
Verdict which accumulates
From lengthening scroll of human fates,
Voice of earth to earth returned,
Prayers of saints that inly burned, —
Saying, *What is excellent,*
As God lives, is permanent;
Hearts are dust, hearts' loves remain,
Heart's love will meet thee again.

THRENODY.

December 31.

TERMINUS.

It is time to be old.
To take in sail : —
The god of bounds,
Who sets to seas a shore,
Came to me in his fatal rounds,
And said : " No more !
No farther shoot
Thy broad ambitious branches, and thy root.
Fancy departs : no more invent,
Contract thy firmament
To compass of a tent. . . . .

As the bird trims her to the gale,
I trim myself to the storm of time,
I man the rudder, reef the sail,
Obey the voice at eve obeyed at prime :
" Lowly faithful, banish fear,
Right onward drive unharmed ;
The port, well worth the cruise, is near,
And every wave is charmed."

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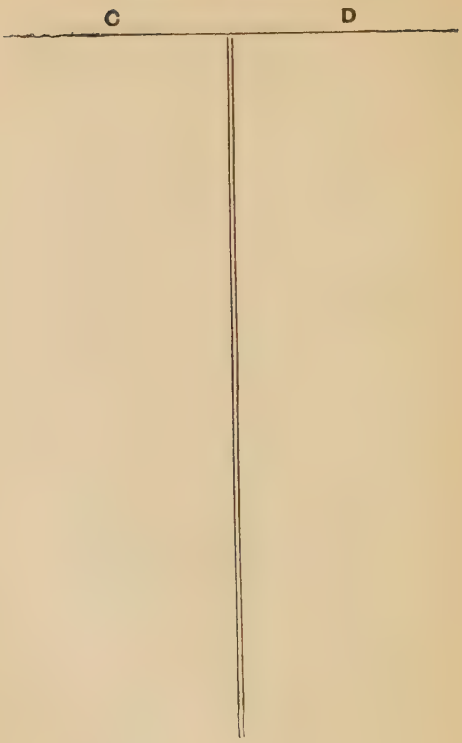
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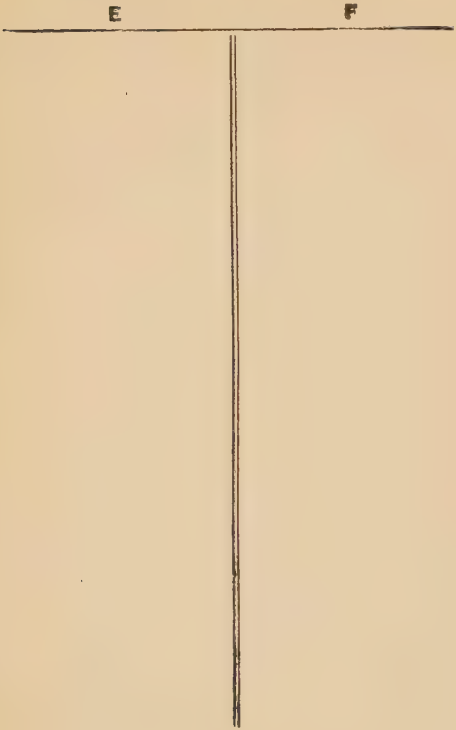
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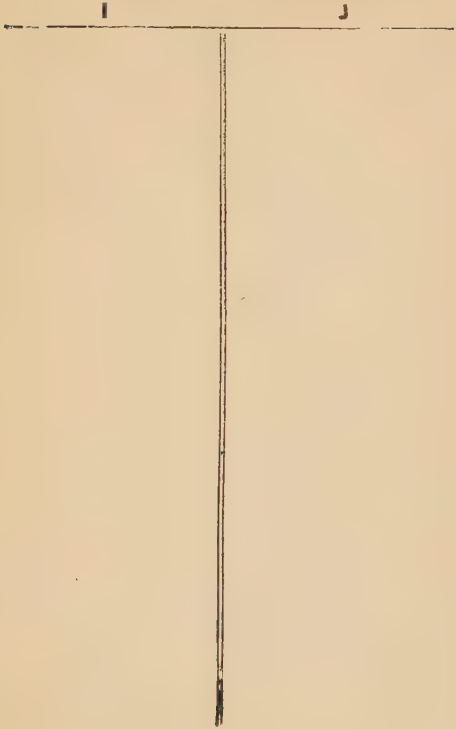

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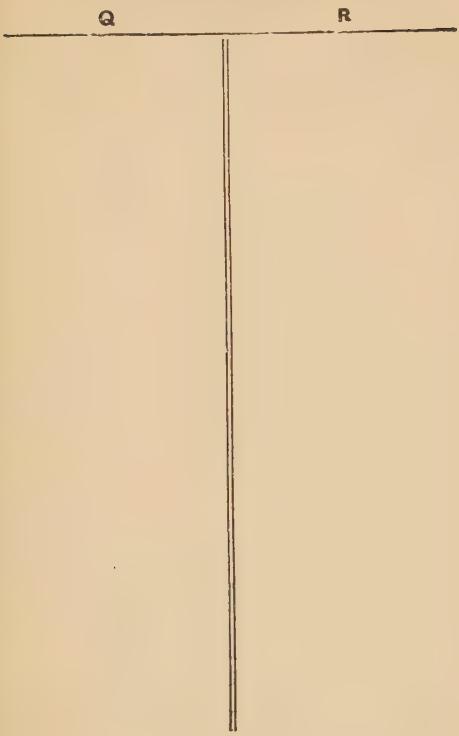
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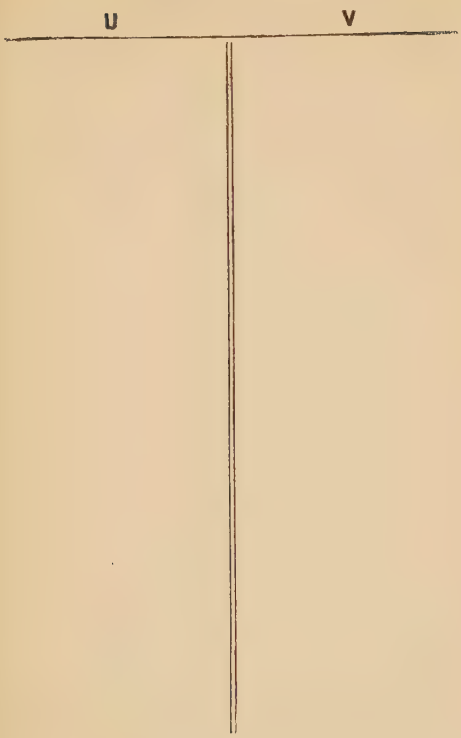
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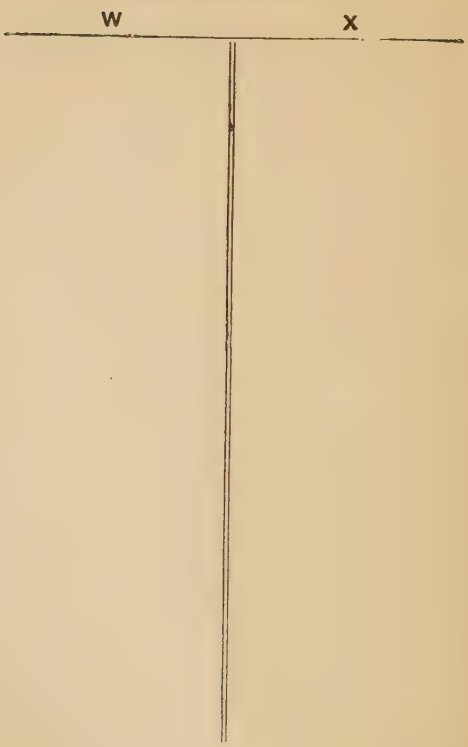
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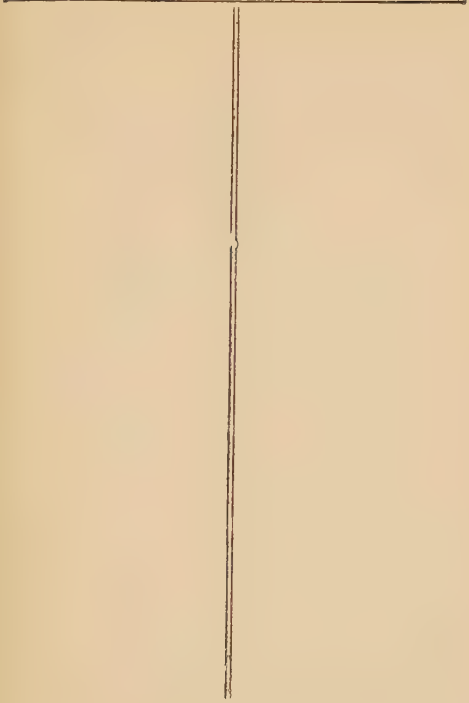

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